• AMAR VANI

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By

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An Image of Kavi Shri Amar Muniji Maharaj

Unveil thy guise, O ye my soul !
Surge towards noddling perfect goal
Yonder thee lurks its Fountain-Peak
Unbaffled rush forth and speak—
Never to part Unthwarted-Glee,
Ah ! I am One with Thee with He

Shake off the mundane cheer and dole
That take Thee far from Radiant Whole
Close mortal eye-lids, think of Own—
'ETERNAL GLORY OVERFLOWN'
So mind it that thy friend is foe
And foe thy friend, ye conscious go

(*Jain, J P*)

AMAR VANI

An Introduction

India has ever been famous in the history of the world as a land of saints and sages, seers and prophets, thinkers and philosophers She has produced from age to age a long line of spiritual luminaries who placed before mankind, both by practice and precept, the highest moral and spiritual values of life and led it from darkness to light, from ignorance to knowledge, from scepticism to faith, from cruelty, animosity and hatred to kindness, love and compassion The most revered Upadhyaya Shri Amar Muniji is one of the brightest of such spiritual luminaries of the present age He practises what he preaches, and preaches what he practises There is perfect harmony between his preaching and practice The words of such a saint have a power, a piquancy, an appeal that the words of a mere preacher can never have *Amar Vani*, the voice eternal, is the voice of this great spiritual apostle It is a beautiful collection, one of the rarest one can find, of his thoughts and meditations on life, on soul, on God and on the universe His meditations on life cover all the facets of the individual social, national and universal life *Amar Vani* is a great apostle's message, an exhortation to man to know himself, to know and realize the powers and

attributes of his soul, to know and understand the universal moral order, and thereby to realize the Truth, Beauty and Goodness of life These are the exhortations of a renowned Jain Muni, but they are by no means sectarian they are universally applicable to man in all conditions, in all places and in all times These are the exhortations of a spiritual scientist who, raising himself above all illusions of caste, creed or nationality, has realized the Eternal Truths of life as clearly and concretely as the scientist realizes the working of the physical phenomena in his laboratory The exhortations of such a spiritual adept cannot fail to hold a beacon light to steer the path of humanity groping in the dark alleys and by-ways of temptations and illusions

The discovery and realization of Peace has been the one great ideal of man since times immemorial But man has not succeeded in achieving his ideal to this day Peace has been eluding man's grasp because his efforts have ever been misdirected Man has sought to discover peace in the fulfilment of his ever-multiplying desires and in the acquisition of material power and wealth The faster man runs after them the farther peace recedes from him In this game of hide-and-seek with Peace, man has lost all his contentment and bliss of life Therefore the reverend Munishri says "The real living peace is to be discovered within the soul of man, and not in the world outside Real peace emerges when man succeeds in curtailing his desires and controlling his passions, when the intense desire for human service awakens in the heart of man, and when the 'self' of man merges itself in the life of humanity Then and only then man can discover Peace"

The Munishri also exposes the hollowness and futility of our scientific progress and civilization In the pursuit of scientific knowledge man has lost sight of his essential human nature and the power of soul "Man has explored the sky, discovered the secrets of the earth and fathomed the depth of oceans He has discovered the hidden power in the atom and invented nuclear weapons on the basis of this knowledge But unfortunately man has not yet succeeded in discovering and understanding his own self or his fellow-men with whom he constantly lives"

Religion is meant to foster goodwill, understanding, tolerance, love and sympathy between man and man But unfortunately, religion as preached and practised by professional and fanatic priests and clergymen has driven mankind to the extreme contrary end No other single factor in the history of the human race has done more damage to man than religious fanaticism What is needed today is to discover a new kind of religion, a new kind of temple and a new kind of mosque This new temple, this new mosque exists within man's own soul Let the priests and adorers throw open the temples and mosques of their own soul Let Allah or God enter the heart of man and show the path of liberation, enlightenment and salvation

With this the Munishri advocates the need of the religion of humanity "When the 'self' of man is so expanded as to embrace the whole of the universe, when the love of 'self' assumes the proportions of the love of the universe, when man comes to see his 'self' in everything and when nothing that exists in the universe is outside man's own 'self', when man finds his own good in the good of all,

and when the sufferings of the meanest of the living creatures become unbearable to him, then are sown the seeds of spiritual awakening in the soul of man Then only emerges the spark of spiritual life, and man traverses from darkness to light It is in this condition that man conquers death and attains immortality In this situation of spiritual awakening whatever man thinks, speaks or does leads to the good of all This is the secret of universal good, and therein is laid the foundation of the religion of humanity" The religion which is basically the religion of life is the best religion The religion of life is the religion of Ahimsa of Truth of Good Conduct, of Equality, of Compassion, Universal Fraternity and Love A religion will be great and beneficial to mankind in proportion as it emphasises these values of humanity Right living is the highest religion

Man is neither merely the body nor mind nor indeed merely the soul He is a harmonious blending of the three Therefore the first duty of man is to keep his body, mind and soul in perfect harmony and to keep all the three healthy, holy and pure The greatness of man depends upon his capability to control his desires, and not in being controlled by them Before you put your footstep upon the path of greatness, you must control and conquer all your desires and passions 'He who is a slave to his passions is an animal He who is striving to conquer his passions is man He who has largely conquered his passions is a god And he who has completely conquered his passions for ever is the God of gods He is the supreme God"

The great man is one who takes selfless service of humanity as the breath of his life His only deity is humanity The foundation of his life is laid in the service of humanity The practice of *Ahimsu* and *Truth* is the guiding principle of his life "The great man is a light-house who continues to guide mankind through the darkness of the world even thousands of years after his death He is the greatest artist of the world. Just as an artist makes beautiful statues out of shapeless stones, so a great man, as an artist of humanity, would mould, mend and enlighten the undeveloped, uncultured unprincipled and rigid humanity He raises man from the state of animalhood"

Let man know, feel and realise the power, the beauty, the splendour of his soul The soul within us is the spark of God No glory is greater than the glory of the soul no halo brighter than the halo of the innerself Let man say and sincerely believe "I am soul I possess all the imperishable glory and radiance of God I am unborn, immortal, infinite I neither take birth nor do I die I am beyond the powers of death My glory transcends all limits of time and space I am Divine Conflagration, unlimited and infinite" Man has infinite knowledge, infinite power, infinite wisdom He should not remain immersed in the mire of mundane pleasures and indulgences Let him fly up and soar to the highest point of infinite spiritual powers Exhorting man the Munishri says "You have the powers of Mahavira, Buddha, Rama, Krishna, Christ, Mohammad and all other great men ever born in the world Just think for a while with a cool head what you really want to be Then whatever you want to be, you will be, if you have faith and determination"

These are the exhortations of a saint and ascetic whose heart is brimful of the milk of human love, kindness and compassion, and from whom emanates spiritual light as naturally as fragrance from the rose *Amar Vani* is an invaluable treasury of the thoughts, meditations and exhortations of this great spiritual Apostle

The present edition is the English rendering of the original *Amar Vani* in Hindi Persistent demands were coming for an English edition of this great book from the non-Hindi speaking people of India and the foreigners This edition is meant to meet this pressing demand It is, of course, true that no translation from one language to another can ever have the beauty the flow, the rhythm, the effect of the original As such, when the Munishri asked me to translate and edit the *Amar Vani* from Hindi to English, I indeed felt honoured, but at the same time very nervous also However, I gathered courage and took up the work I have made all efforts possible for me to impart to it the spirit of the original But flaws and failings in such an attempt are inescapable For these I seek and solicit forgiveness of the most reverend Munishri

January 26 1973 **B B Jain**

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1. The Basic Problem

The Basic Problem

The basic problem before man is how to make this transient life TRUE, GOOD and BEAUTIFUL ?

The Living Peace

Man has been striving after discovering real peace since times immemorial But unfortunately efforts have not been made to discover this peace where it can really be found We have found illusions of peace, but not real peace One can force a man to hold his peace by the power of the sword Another kind of seeming peace can be had by living in blissful ignorance or in the false glamour of illusions But this is the peace of death, not the peace of life The real living peace is to be discovered within the soul of man, and not in the world outside Real peace emerges when man succeeds in curtailing his desires and controlling his passions ; when the intense desire for human service awakens in the heart of man, and when the 'self' of man merges itself in the life of humanity Then and only then man can bring down the blessings of heaven on the earth

Man has not recognised Man

Man has explored the sky, discovered the secrets of the earth and fathomed the depth of the ocean Man has discovered the

hidden power in the atom and invented nuclear weapons on the basis of this knowledge This invention has created havoc in the world In brief man, by the help of science, has discovered every hidden secret of the universe But unfortunately man has not yet succeeded in discovering and understanding his fellow men with whom he constantly lives

Is it Progress ?

One wonders whether the modern scientific progress is really a progress or is it fall of man The aeroplane may be seen roaring through the sky Indeed science has given man the power to fly in the sky Man can fly and soar high in the space, but the result of this achievement has been that man has lost touch with the earth The result of this great achievement has been that man has learnt to fly but forgotten to live in the world and walk on this earth with man as man It cannot be termed as real progress It is certainly a fall

The Madness of Man

Man has gone mad and crazy in the glamour of modern civilization He builds palatial buildings with high minarets and domes He fits up in them gates and windows, but, in utter ignorance, he keeps them all closed Then man, like a lunatic, runs about from one room to another within the closed house, crying that the rays of the sun do not light his house He finds in his house darkness, dampness and foul smell One may well ask this foolish man as to who is responsible for this predicament The sun shines in the sky and the breeze continues to blow as usual But how can the rays of the sun or the fresh breeze of the morning enter his house when he keeps all his doors and windows closed Let him open the doors and windows, and then the light of the sun and the fresh breeze of

the morning would reach his house Then there will no more be darkness, dampness or foul smell This is exactly what happens with man in the spiritual sense Man keeps closed all the sources of spiritual light within his soul He keeps himself bound in the fetters of materialism and selfishness This generates in his heart darkness, dampness and foul smell. And the strange thing is that he complains against those very bonds and snares which he has himself woven around him and which have thrown him in that spiritual darkness This is indeed a hard situation

New Temples and New Mosques

Today Allah has been closed down within the mosque and Brahma has been locked within the temple Both of them are awaiting to be taken out of their captivity Therefore what is needed today is to discover a new kind of temple and a new kind of mosque This new temple and this new mosque exists within man's own soul Let the priests and adorers throw open the temples and mosques of their own soul Let Allah or God enter the heart of man and show the path of liberation, enlightenment and salvation

A Word to the Philosophers

I invite the philosophers of the world to read the book of life Let them read the life of the common man There they will find hunger, poverty and want Before proceeding to solve the intricate mysteries of God and the universe, let us solve these basic problems of the common man Nothing real can be gained by the hair-splitting analysis of metaphysical problems and propositions, if we ignore the basie problems of life Let us begin with life and not with metaphysics

2. Bhuma Twewe*

The Universal Good

When the self of man is so expanded as to embrace the whole of the universe, when the love of 'self' assumes the proportions of the love of the universe, when man comes to see his 'Self' in every thing, and when nothing that exists in the universe is outside man's own 'Self', when man finds his own good in the good of all, and when the sufferings of the meanest of the living creatures become unbearable to him, then are sown the seeds of spiritual awakening in the soul of man Then only emerges the spark of spiritual life, and man traverses from darkness to light It is in this condition that man conquers death and attains immortality In this situation of spiritual awakening whatever man thinks or speaks or does, leads to the good of all This is the secret of universal good

The Real Conquest

Man has been brandishing the sword since times immemorial But what victory has he accomplished ? The accomplishment of real victory still remains a dream and illusion What has been conquered ? Has man conquered the body or the soul ? Whom has he conquered and by what weapons ? Has he accomplished

* It is a Sanskrit phrase which means "He who is great "

his so-called victory by the power of the sword or by the power of love ? A victory which is not prompted by and accomplished through love, compassion and sacrifice is no victory It is mere barbarity Real victory is one that is accomplished without shedding a drop of blood, and which does not generate in the heart of the victor any feeling of pride, vanity, hatred or contempt for the vanquished Real victory is prompted by the keen desire to serve the vanquished and to win his heart Real victory purifies and elevates both the victor and the vanquished

The Basic Social Order

The barriers of caste, creed, status and economic superiority are eating into the vitals of human culture and civilisation Our culture and civilisation cannot grow and prosper until and unless these barriers of differences between man and man are removed Therefore it is the duty of every single man and woman to think every morning and evening what he or she can do to eliminate these barriers of differences Let every man say to himself, "There is no essential difference between man and man Every man has equal right to his independent progress and promotion." The basic tenet of every social order is 'to live and let live'

'I' and 'Mine'

"I" and "Mine" are the poisons of life They create fetters which man cannot break off They keep the man bound in the narrow circle of "Self" Man hears the voice of his own Self and remains attached to his own desires and passions But as soon as these fetters of the "Self" are broken and as soon as man learns to love the "Non-self", he begins to emanate spiritual light Streams of love,

compassion and kindness begin to flow out from his heart. "The sorrow of the world is my sorrow, and the joy of the world is my joy"—this is the realization of the expanded Self which is all-good and all-beneficent, and which may confer immortality on man in this otherwise transient world.

'I' and 'We'

'I' leads to hell, while 'We' shows the way to heaven Man will bring heavenly blessings to society in proportion as the sense of 'I' decreases and that of 'We' increases in the human heart Where there is 'I', there is pride, there is vanity, there is cowardice, there is envy, jealousy, greed, temptation and discontentment Where there is 'We', there is humility, there is innocence, there is love, there is unity, liberality, sacrifice and renunciation 'I' is narrow and confined, 'We' is universal and unconfined

Be Ocean and not a Drop

There is danger all around for a small drop of water The dry earth seeks to absorb it, the gust of wind tries to waft it away, the scorching rays of the sun are out to evaporate it and the thirsty bird is eager to swallow it In brief, there is death all around it If the drop of water has to preserve its identity, it must merge its small entity with the ocean It must change itself from its small size of the drop to the large size of the ocean. The ocean has no fear, no danger Storms and tempests may blow, millions of animals and birds may drink water in it, the burning rays of the sun may scorch it, and lightning and thunder may seek to thwart it, but the ocean has no fear from any of them This is because the ocean is large, it is immense There is no fear to its existence. This analogy

is applicable to human life also. 'I' and 'Mine' are small entities like the small drop of water 'We' and 'Our' are large and immense like ocean, and therefore they have no fear in the world. 'I' and 'Mine' must, therefore, change into 'We' and 'Our' In that condition alone man can preserve his entity It is then that man can transcend the bounds of time and space and become eternal and immortal

Learn to live for Others

What do the sun and the moon personally gain by giving light to the world ? What is the use of fruits and flowers to the trees that bear them ? What personal motive is there before the rivers in their ceaseless flow ? All the phenomena of Nature perform their functions in a spirit of selfless service of the universe If so, why should not man, the roof and crown of all creation, submerge his self-interest, and work for the welfare and good of the whole of humanity ?

Finite and Infinite Love

Selfish and finite love is the attribute of animalhood, while infinite love is the index of pure humanity. In infinite love there is no place for hatred, animosity, jealousy or violence. Maotse, the famous Chinese apostle of non-violence says, "The thief loves his house and not the houses of others This is why he steals from the houses of others for his own house The murderer loves himself and not others This is why he kills others for preserving himself. Men in authority love their own families and not those of others Therefore they exploit others in order to feed and nourish their own families Kings love their own

countries and not others. This is why they invade other countries for the sake of their own countries If everybody learns to love the houses of others as he loves his own, there will be no theft If everybody should come to love others as he loves himself, there will be no murder If we love the families of others as we love our own, there will be no exploitation If we are as considerate to other countries as we are to our own, there will be no war"

3. Harmony

The Principle of Harmony

The preservance of harmony between the interior and the exterior is popularly termed as DHARMA There will be peace in one's life in proportion as there is harmony between the interior and the exterior, and discontent in proportion as there is disharmony between the two Therefore the principle of harmony in life is the basic principle of DHARMA and YOGA Lord Krishna says in Gita, "The highest YOGA is the preservance of harmony"

The Key to Success

Can you preserve your mental and emotional harmony in conflicting and discordant situations ? Can you foster harmony between conflicting elements, principles, groups and individuals ? Can you be sometimes more tender than a flower and at other times, when situation demands, more strong than steel ? Can you discover unity behind variety, and variety behind unity ? If so, I can emphatically say that when time comes, you will be a very successful ascetic or administrator or a house-holder

The Secret of Duty

What is the gardener doing in the garden ? He is pruning, cutting or even plucking away some plants, and

planting the saplings of others and watering them Why is there this difference ? Why this contradiction ? The gardener should equally love all the plants and trees in his garden How is it, then, that he seems to love some plants and hate others ?

The gardener would reply, "No, my brother, I am not prompted by any distinctions of love and hatred between one plant and the other I love them all equally But I have to keep in view a higher aim I must look to the over-all good of the garden I have to preserve the beauty of the garden I must see that the garden as a whole must progress and prosper well It is in this spirit and with this aim in view that, for the sake of the over-all good of the garden, I have to make some distinctions Should my sense of duty fail to distinguish beween one and the other, I shall be failing in my final duty You should not miscalculate the outer appearance of my actions , you should look into the spirit of my actions Mine is not a case of love and hatred it is a case of duty I have to do my duty for preserving the beauty of the garden "

Joy and Sorrow are our Guests

Do you not welcome a guest who comes to your house ? Joy and Sorrow are both your guests Welcome Sorrow as cheerfully as you welcome Joy Sorrow is your guest It has come on your own invitation How can it, then, go to the house of your neighbour ? No, it will not go there , it cannot go there It will stay with you in your own house, whether you laugh or weep. It is your guest Remember, it is always honourable to seem cheerful rather than unhappy before your guest

Equanimity in Joy

Preachers and thinkers usually counsel us to keep our emotional equanimity in our sorrows and hardships But should we preserve this mental and emotional equanimity only in sorrow, and not in joy? I feel that it is more necessary to preserve this equanimity in joy than in sorrow There are innumerable examples in history to prove that many great men have gone mad on account of their failure to preserve their mental and emotional equanimity in their joy and triumph Ravana, Duryodhan, Kansa and Jarasandh are some of the names belonging to this category of mad men known in history

Cause or Instrument

Man may have two temperaments One may be the temperament of a dog and the other may be that of a lion When somebody strikes a dog with a stick, the dog pounces upon the stick and holds it in his mouth The dog believes that it is the stick that is striking him But can the problem be solved by holding the stick and not the hand that moves it? So long as the hand behind the stick is not caught, the movement of the stick will continue The dog fails to understand this secret The dog does not distinguish between the cause and the instrument The case with the lion is different When somebody strikes a lion with a stick or hurls a stone at him, he does not pounce upon the stick or the stone He pounces upon the man who strikes the stick or throws the stone To the lion the stick or the stone has no significance. The entire responsibility lies with the man who wields them

This analogy applies in the moral and spiritual sense also The ignorant feel angry upon those who cause sorrow

to them without realizing the real cause of that sorrow But the enlightened ones do not feel angry upon the man who causes them sorrow They try to discover the cause behind his actions The enlightened one would say . "What is the fault of this poor man ? He is only prompted by his passions of hatred and animosity. He is helpless Why should I be angry with him ? Let me try to drain out the passions that lie hidden in his soul, and which prompt him to take this course of action against me Should I be able to wash out those passions from his soul, he will automatically change into a good man" Thus the men who have the temperament of the lion hold the cause and not the instrument responsible for any action

Do not Fly, but Change Your Attitude

I would exhort the house-holders not to flee the world After all where can you go ? Wherever you go, you will find the world around you Therefore do not try to run away from the world, but change your attitude Drain out the poison of attachment with the material possessions of the world and the members of your family Use everything that you have in the world in a spirit of detachment In this spirit of detachment there is no sorrow, there is no involvement This will, on the contrary, give you strength and immortality You have to kill the spirit of attachment You know that arsenic poison, when burnt into ashes, becomes a life-giving medicine So burn your attachment into ashes

Altitude of Asceticism

When you stand on the peak of a mountain, you find everything below you in its diminutive form The tall

trees, cows and buffaloes and men look like pigmies In the same way the ascetic, dwelling on the high altitudes of spirituality, finds the worldly possessions and pleasures of life insignificant and meaningless He gives no importance to sensuous pleasures, wealth, honour, prestige or glamour of life The world has its importance to those who remain attached to it, but for those who live on the spiritual plane, the world has nothing to offer

Harmony between the Interior and the Exterior

O fond man, why do you exhibit yourself in false colours ? Be what you are The real greatness of man lies in harmonising the exterior with the interior If you show yourself as you really are, you will be liberated

The Ideal of Actionism

One may ask, "What is the ideal of actionism in real practical life ?" I would explain my point of view with an anecdote Suppose a man is going somewhere Another man comes from the opposite direction and hurls a stone at him What will be the reaction of this on the first man ? You would reply, "There will be anger and fury in the heart There will be mental and emotional excitement and a strong desire for revenge There will be hatred and contempt for the man who hurled the stone" Now I would ask you to imagine another situation Suppose you are going And while going, you stumble and fall down and you cry with pain What will happen then ? You would reply, "What can be done in that situation ! It was my own mistake that I fell down and hurt myself How can I blame another ? Whom can I hate or condemn for this ? I have hurt myself and therefore I

must bear with it patiently After all it was my own mistake." Then I would say, "This is what actionism teaches you Bear all your sorrows and hardships with patience and equanimity There is no use blaming others or hating them On the contrary, if you blame others and start upon a campaign of hatred and contempt against them, you will weave fetters around you which will cause you even more pain The cause of sorrow lies in your own actions, in your own feelings The fault is in your own self Others are merely instruments Therefore the principle of actionism gives you training in developing a spirit of tolerance and equanimity"

4. Truth, Goodness, Beauty

Let Heaven Descend in Life

The attainment of heaven after death is not so important as the bringing down of heaven on the stage of life If you want to bring about the desired change in the life to come, the prerequisite for it is to introduce the same change in your present life

Struggle and Co-operation

The progress of the human race depends not on struggle but on co-operation, not on competition but on co-ordination, not on animosity but on love Our future depends upon our mutual co-operation and brotherhood Peace and goodwill can be promoted in the world in proportion to the development of fraternal feelings and co-operation between man and man over the entire face of the earth

Truth

Truth is a penance, a hard penance The path of truth is sharp like the edge of the sword While treading on the path of truth, one should not be swayed to one side or the other, nor should one halt on the way One must keep on marching steadily, step by step, towards his

ideal The seeker after truth must have only one motto before him "Strive on, keep on striving"

Truth Vs Bitter Truth

Truth is one thing and bitter truth another We should tell the truth, but this truth, though effective, should not injure the feelings of the hearer

Individual And Truth

Follow the path of truth without swaying to this side or that Man takes birth and therefore he dies But truth is unborn and therefore it never dies Truth is eternal and immortal

Truth And Goodness

It is not right to hold that whatever is true should be spoken On the contrary, that truth alone should be spoken which is likely to bring good to all

Non-Violence

Non-violence is a mighty power against which fear, doubt, hatred and animalism cannot stand even for a moment

Non-violence is the foundation-rock of humanity It is the symbol of man's greatness We must follow the path of non-violence, if we want to have peace and goodwill in the family, in society, in the country and in the world *Ahimsa* is the heart-region of life If this heart-region is active and alive, it keeps the stream of life ever-flowing, otherwise it dries up

The killing of another creature is killing yourself Similarly, the saving of the life of another creature is the saving of your own life None can truly follow the path of *Ahimsa* until he has realised the whole truth of this eternal spiritual principle

Successful Application of Non-Violence

Love and non-violence appear weak and ineffective in their undeveloped state Water can extinguish fire, but it is possible only when water in sufficient quantity is poured on fire If a forest catches fire, and if you pour a handful of water over it, it will have no effect But if torrential rain of water falls upon the burning forest, the fire will be extinguished, without leaving a single spark alive Today we apply a little of non-violence, of the quantity of a draught of water, to extinguish the huge conflagration of violence and hatred How can this huge fire be extinguished by a little of non-violence ? Let there be torrential rain of love and non-violence, and the raging conflagration of violence and enmity will be extinguished

Resistance To Brutal Force

If a man bites you like a dog, and in revenge you also bite him like a dog, there is no difference between you and him Neither of you has risen above the level of a dog Should brute force be retaliated with brute force ? Should not moral force be applied against the brute force ? If you want to liberate the world from the fetters of violence and brute force, you must learn to apply moral force against it There is no alternative to it Fire cannot be extinguished by fire Water is needed to extinguish fire

The Power of Love

By the power of the sword you can conquer the body of a man but not his heart If you want to conquer the heart of a man and to subdue him permanently, you must apply the power of love The kingdom of love is eternal and immortal The sword does not last even to one's life-time

The devotee of non-violence has no enemy He whose heart is brimming over with love for others, gets love in return everywhere He gets nothing but love and honour Love gets love, contempt gets contempt

The Great Truth

"He who rises by the power of the sword, falls at the point of the sword" These words of Lord Christ can never be forgotten They summarise the entire history of the wars fought in the world Peace can be established in the world by the power of love, and not by the sword Those who believe in the doctrine of peaceful co-existence are a blessing to the world A force which is not prompted by universal love and goodwill is diabolic and not benevolent It is the force of Ravana and not of Rama

The Path of Love

Lust and passion are not love The path of love is the path of spirituality Love does not depend upon physical beauty or wealth True love seeks to discover spiritual beauty and noble moral qualities

Love and Attachment

Love and attachment are two different things It is wrong to take them as synonyms Whereas love enobles

and expands the soul, attachment contracts it Love is the expression of selfless devotion, while attachment is the expression of self-interestedness

Love

What is love ? It is a spiritual current that leads man from enmity to friendship, from individualism to universalism Love embraces the whole world within its fold

The Liberality of Rama

History bears testimony to the fact that when Rama first met Vibhishana, he hailed him as the 'Sovereign of Lanka' A monkey-disciple who was sitting by, smiled and asked "Supposing Ravana returns Sita, where will you find a kingdom for him ?" Rama seriously replied, "There is no difficulty I shall request my brother Bharata to abandon the throne of Ayodhya for him" This is the ideal of Rama Should we not all try to rise to that spiritual height ? Man attains greatness not by amassing wordly powers and possessions, but by liberally giving away what he has

The Great Message

The best thing is that wherever you live and under whatever circumstances you work weave around you a small circle of social service and render all the service you can within the means available to you

If unfortunately you do not have the capacity to serve others, or if you are not in a position to do so, you can at least always do one thing forbear from doing any disservice to others If you cannot make others laugh, at least do not make them weep If you cannot bless others, at least do not curse them, do not abuse them

II

Life

- THE ART OF LIFE
- MAN
- THE SUPERMAN
- YOUTH

1. The Art of Life

The Essence of Life

What is life ? It is nothing but a ceaseless conflict of opposite forces He who can stand firm against the tempests of life, and march on, step by step, without deviating from the path of duty, is a lion, and the rest are timid hares

Life is Dynamism

Strive on, march on forward—this is the message of life Do not halt, keep on marching Going ahead is life, standing still is death This applies equally to an individual, to a society and to a country He who stands stationary is lost and he who keeps on marching ahead acquires a new lease of life day after day.

The cataracts keep on flowing Many of them join together and become a river, and keep on flowing, giving water to all those who are thirsty Finally they join the ocean, and themselves become the ocean The pond of the village, on the contrary, does not flow It remains stagnant and therefore gets polluted It begins to breed mosquitoes and contaminates the whole atmosphere It becomes an object of contempt for everybody

The Path of Life

Living the life of a weak, frightened, fawning and obsequious life of a stray dog is no life at all Bowing your head and surrendering yourself before injustice is a mark of weakness The coward can never fight the battle of life He wastes his life in placating others He keeps on compromising himself with everybody and thus in the end creeps into the grave

In the like manner living the life of an ever-howling hungry wolf is also no life There is no zest in meeting or grief in parting in such a life There is nothing but burning fire all around There is not a drop of water Nor is it good to be hard like a stone There must be the tenderness of love in life A judicious blending of hardness and tenderness is the ideal way of life

The Purpose of Life

The purpose of life is not merely the accumulation and amassing of material possessions Its real ideal is to distribute and give away judiciously whatever you have got

The Key to Success

You often find your task uninteresting, unsuccessful and incomplete Have you ever considered why it is so ? It is high time you should have considered this Your task is left incomplete because you do not apply all your faith, all your devotion and all your intelligence and energy to the completion of the task These are the prerequisites for getting honour and success in life Nothing can be obtained without them

Those who undertake the mission of their life half-heartedly, who do not take full interest in it, and do not work with all their energy, with all their powers and full faith, can never secure a position of trust and responsibility. It is an old idiom that "He who goes mourning, brings the news of death" Consequently, we should never go to fight the battle of life weeping Go smiling Smile yourself and make others smile This is the key to success. This should never be forgotten

The Brave and the Coward

What is the difference between the brave and the coward ? There is a difference of just one step Whereas the step of the brave always goes forward, the step of the coward goes backwards The coward runs away from the battle of life

Success and Fame

The greatest mistake of man is that he does not make as vigorous efforts to get success as he does to get fame Without success you can never get fame If by some foul means you manage to get some fame without perfecting yourself, your fame will not last It will be a temporary phase Therefore in the battle of life we should strive to get perfection We should not bother our head about getting fame Once you get success and perfection, fame will come unsought for

Self-led or led by Others

If you have eyes to see and the capacity to use your eyes judiciously, you will go ahead to your ideal straight

like an arrow You should not wait for another person to lead you But if you do not have your own eyes to see, you should look for somebody who could see for you and lead you In any way, do not stand still, keep on marching Through small degrees you will one day accomplish the goal of life March you must, whether you march as the teacher or as the disciple, as the leader or as the led. This depends upon your talents

From the Scaffold to the Throne

In *Jaina* scriptures there are many stories of the conversion of the scaffold into the throne This is indeed a metaphor of life Wealth, honours, members of your family, friends and acquaintances,—they are all a scaffold. They pierce the most vulnerable part of your life You can never be happy with them unless you know the art of converting this scaffold into the throne Mount the scaffold of life, but having mounted it, convert it into the throne Rub out the sharp edge of attachment Lay down all your achievements and possessions on the altar of human service Wherever there is 'I' or 'MINE' there is the scaffold, and wherever there is 'WE' or 'OUR' there is the throne of life

Rebound after Fall

You have caught the pulse of life, if you have learnt to rebound with double force and speed after fall The cataract rebounds with double force after striking against the rock See how the small ball rebounds when struck upon the ground Every stroke of misfortune should, likewise, elevate you This is the secret of life which man must understand

From the Kutub Minar

Once while standing on the last tier of the Kutub Minar in Delhi, I heard the discordant sounds of men, motor-cars, tongas and many other things But to me, from that height, they seemed to be humming into one long harmonious song This gave me a very deep philosophical thought The higher an ascetic keeps himself above the ordinary material plane and the farther he keeps himself away from the world, the lesser will he feel the mental conflict, and deeper will he enjoy the peace and bliss of concentration and harmony As we come down to the material plane, the differences and conflicts appear magnified, and the higher we rise, the differences vanish away

The Blessings of Suffering

Why are you afraid of the strokes of misfortunes and sufferings ? Let them fall, let them fall with all their force The drum does not sound of itself It sounds when the strokes fall upon it As soon as the striker falls upon the drum, it produces a deep solemn sound that appeals to the ears far and wide Similarly, if the drum of life is strong, the strokes of misfortune, however hard they may be, will produce a serene spiritual sound which will resound all over the world

Be Pure Gold

There is fear of fire to hay and straw Just a spark of fire would burn them into ashes But pure gold has no fear from fire On the contrary, when heated in fire, it shines all the more Therefore man should make himself pure gold, not hay and straw Then let there be any

amount of the fire of suffering, it will enoble and purify him instead of burning him into ashes

Learn to Play with Dangers

They alone get honour and fame in the world who come forward against all obstacles and devote themselves to the service of humanity, who do not allow themselves to be overpowered by difficulties even in the midst of conflicts and hard struggles To those who lag behind and keep themselves away from the fray, there can be no honour or fame Elephants fight on the battle-field and stick to their positions, while mosquitoes remain confined into the dirty dark cells

Keep Your Word

You swear to give up evil But a little temptation draws you back to the path of evil, and you forswear yourself Remember that forswearing is worse than not swearing at all It is a bitter truth But this bitter dose will save you from drinking poison Sati Rajimati*

* The story of Rajimati is very famous in Jaina literature Her marriage had been settled with Lord Neminath, the 22nd Tirthanker While coming with the marriage procession, he heard the pitiable cries of birds and animals who were to be killed for feeding the marriage party Hearing these cries he went back without marriage and became a monk Rajimati also preferred to follow the path of her fianced husband rather than marrying another man She became a nun Once while going through Revatachal mountains, she was overtaken by heavy rain She was drenched to the skin There was a cave nearby She entered the cave and started drying up her clothes Rathnemi, the younger brother of Neminath was already standing there in meditation In the flash of lightning he happened to see her naked He lost his mental balance and proposed to Rajimati to indulgence with him At this she gave him the above reply and thus brought him back to the path of asceticism

reprimanded Rathnemi on this point, saying "Do you want to eat what has been vomitted out ? It is the dog that does so, not man Death is far preferable to this sinful life. Verily, a forswearing life immersed in sensuous indulgences is as good as dead"

Benevolent Exploitation

So long as man lives in the world, he has to make his living by business or some other means He has to collect many things to live in this world This inevitably involves some amount of exploitation of the people around him But this exploitation should be benevolent It should be like milking the cow We keep the cow, feed her and maintain her well, and then only we milk her Whatever feed we give to the cow, we get back in the form of milk In the same way, man should first serve the society, should give something to it and then only take from it what is absolutely necessary for a reasonably comfortable living in society In brief, benevolent exploitation is like milking the cow while malevolent exploitation is like sucking the blood

Hardness

If you have to be hard, be hard like the coconut The coconut appears very hard and rough from outside, but from within it is full of soft, sweet and life-giving gourd and juice It is a sin to be be hard both from within and without like a piece of stone

The Music of Life

The great man is at once hard like steel and soft like butter The harmonious blending of hardness and softness makes the sweet music of good life

Life and Death

The mere breathing for an allotted period is not life, and the cessation of this breathing process is not death The meaning of life is, 'Make the world feel your existence' This one should do not by building palatial buildings or by exploiting others, but by sacrificing one's own life for others Learn to inhale every breath for others The day you begin to breathe for yourself, you die

2. Man

On the Crossing of the World

Man is standing on the crossing of the world He can go wherever he chooses He can become whatever he likes He who chooses to retain his human dignity and sense of duty will go to heaven and get liberation He who falls below the plane of humanity will go to hell and become an animal in the life to come

Animal, Man, God and Supreme God

He who is a slave of his passions is an animal He who is striving to conquer his passions is man He who has largely conquered his passions is a god And he who has completely conquered his passions for ever is the God of gods He is the supreme God He is the conqueror of the world

Man is God

According to the philosophy of Lord Mahavira every man is a God, the enlightened one, the omniscient, the conqueror of the 'self' All he has to do is to know himself, mend himself, cleanse himself and make himself perfect

The Centre of Humanitly

Man, do you truly know yourself? What are you? Are you the physical body, or the soul permeating in every pore of your body? He who attunes himself to the voice of the soul is a man And he who remains confined to his body, and who does not go ahead, is an animal in the shape of man Verily, the centre of humanity is soul, not body

Rights and Duties

Man, your function is to do your duty reward is not thy concern Why do you not care so much about your duty as you do about your rights? The farmer can plough the field, sow the seed, arrange for watering and manuring and also guard and supervise his field But the sprouting of the seed is not in his hand, it is in the hands of Nature This is an eternal and universal principle Could you not apply this principle in the field of your duties?

The Value of Man

A man should not be adjudged and valued by his wealth or his high position or by the number of his followers The real value of man lies in his faithful performance of the duty assigned to him A man is valuable in proportion as he performs his duty with sincerity and a sense of responsibility, and in proportion as he is prepared to lay down his life on the altar of duty

The Aim of Human Life

The highest aim of human life is renunciation, not enjoyment it is not indulgence in worldly pleasures Indulgence

as the aim of life has always been injurious and will always remain so.

The Meaning of Human Life

Human life is meant to bring peace and happiness to every living creature It is not meant for indulgence in worldly pleasures or for ceaseless struggle for procuring those pleasures

Humanity

Is it the true mark of humanity that you eat good food ? Even the dogs and cats of the rich men eat good food Is it the true mark of humanity that you live in magnificent and palatial buildings ? Even birds can build their nests in those buildings, and insects can also live there Is it the mark of humanity that you can read Sanskrit or Prakrit ? Even parrots and some other birds can recite Sanskrit verses Is it the mark of humanity that you are strong and brave ? The lion is very strong, brave and cruel None of these is the true index of humanity Wherein, then, lies true humanity ? True humanity lies in high thoughts and noble character

The Source of Humanity

I have seen hard mountain rocks, but also I have seen tender blades of grass and bushes growing upon them. I have also seen cool and fresh streams of water flowing through those hard rocks of the mountains Can man be harder than the mountains, so that the streams of love, kindness and sympathy should not flow from his heart ?

Break the Hard Surface

There are oceans flowing underneath the hard layers of the earth There are streams of water flowing underneath the hard mountain rocks You have only to remove the hard surface and you will get water and water In the same way underneath the outer hard layer of selfishness in the heart of man there is an unbounded ocean of sympathy and kindness Break this hard crust of selfishness and let the stream of the nectar of humanity flow from it Therein lies the secret of human success

The Plane of Humanity

If you are a god, come down a little , and if you are an animal, raise yourself a little The plane of humanity lies midway between godhood and animalhood The path leading to liberation lies straight from the plane of humanity Animal is in the fallen state and god is beyond the reach of man The path to liberation does not pass through either of these planes It passes only through the plane of human life One can attain liberation only by treading on the path of humanity in a spirit of service, dedication and sacrifice

The Development of Consciousness

The ideal of the common man is confined to the pleasures of the body and senses His consciousness remains confined to his 'self' It does not go beyond it Such a man can stoop to any kind of sin, evil, injustice or exploitation in order to protect and preserve his 'self' The only deity that he worships is his small 'Self'

When man advances a step further, he begins to think of the protection and preservation of the family in place of his

'self' Beyond that there may come the consciousness of preserving and protecting the society and the nation But the real enlightened consciousness does not remain confined even within those limits It embraces the whole of humanity The real devotee of humanity is the man who is so large-hearted and broad-minded that he believes in and works for the good of the entire humanity After all, the good of the individual lies in the good of all Man should so enlarge this instinct of self-preservation that he may work for the good of the whole of humanity

Humanity

Man should not remain confined to the coils of 'self' The greatness of man lies in breaking away from the narrow circle of the 'self' Therefore every cord of the lyre of the human heart should vibrate with the holy feeling of universal love and fraternity The key to success in life lies in devoting yourself to the promotion of peace, happiness and good of every living creature This immortal principle should never be forgotten

What is Man ?

Man is neither merely the body nor mind nor indeed merely the soul He is a harmonious blending of the three Therefore, the first duty of man is to keep his body, mind and soul in perfect harmony and to keep all the three healthy, holy and pure

The Touchstone of Man

Don't be afraid of sufferings and difficulties They are a touchstone to test the purity and mettle of man. Remember

that the touchstone is applied only to gold, not to iron or nickel

Man, Animal and Devil

He whose life is balanced, disciplined and regular is a man He whose life is neither balanced nor disciplined nor regular is an animal if weak, and a devil if strong

Three Categories of Men

He whose heart speaks before his tongue is a great man

He whose tongue speaks first and heart later is a common man

And he whose tongue alone speaks and not his heart is a mean man

Service Counts, not the Amount of Service

In this vast world the power of the common man is very insignificant He can do very little service But the success of man does not depend upon the greatness or smallness of his power The successful man is one who successfully employes the little power he has in the service of humanity A drop of water that has quenched the thirst of a particle of dust has succeeded in achieving its goal of life It is to be praised for it

Mean, Ordinary and Great

Men can be divided into three categories—mean, ordinary and great Bharathari says, "Those who do not begin a work

for fear of difficulties are mean men The ordinary men are those who start their work with courage but who give up their efforts when difficulties come in their way. But the great men are those who would carry on their work whatever difficulties and obstacles may come in their way They would not give up their efforts until they get success Great men may take time to decide what is just But once they decide what is just and believe that it must be done, then they would work towards its achievement whatever difficulties may come in their way They would kick away all the difficulties even if they were mountain-high, and would carry on their efforts ceaselessly This is the eternal principle of the great man

Man and Superman

There is a great difference between the acting and preaching of a common man and of a superman The practice of the common man is to act once and preach a thousand times Sometimes they only preach and never act The principle of the superman is to act more and preach less Sometimes there is no preaching, there is action only The elimination of difference between acting and preaching is the first mark of greatness.

Man and His Circumstances

Who is superior and stronger between man and his circumstances ? It is believed that this question was raised by Carlyle, the famous philosopher and historian of England However, this is a question that has been coming down since the beginning of the human race

This question can be answered in two ways The first answer can be this "Man is weak and helpless. We

have no strength or existence of our own. It is the circumstances that make or unmake man. Man is the slave, the bond slave of his circumstances It may be that a small man may have become great. Well, he may have got favourable circumstances. Another man has been ruined What could he do ? Circumstances did not favour him" This is one way of approaching the problem

The second approach to the same problem can be stated thus "Circumstances are nothing, man is supreme Can circumstances forcibly bring down or raise a man ? No, it is not possible Man is an independent being He is not a toy in the hands of circumstances The strong man can control and govern his circumstances He can make even the unfavourable circumstances favourable to him He can mould the circumstances to his liking Man is the conqueror and not the slave of circumstances Circumstances can control only that man who has already lost his manhood and strength "

This second approach is the approach of SHRAMANA CULTURE *Shramana* **Culture** believes in the superiority of man over his circumstances Man is himself the architect of his fate He is the centre of unlimited power He is the conqueror of the world He alone and none else has that mighty power

3. Superman

Definition of the Great Man

Common men are moulded by their circumstances, while great men mould the circumstances themselves Time and circumstances do not govern the great men · it is they who govern and mould them Therefore the great man is described as the "BUILDER OF AGES"

The Path of Greatness

On the one hand man wants to be great and on the other he is afraid of difficulties He wants to run away from the tempests of difficulties and hardships This is a strange paradox of human life The path of greatness does not pass through gardens and orchards laden with fruits and flowers Its path passes through thorns, bushes, rocks and tempests This is a narrow path on which death, dishonour and hardships threaten you at every step. It may be possible that even when you reach your goal, you may get nothing but stones there A great philosopher says that "every great man is to be stoned This is his fate"

The Artist of Humanity

The great man is one who takes selfless service of humanity as the breath of his life His only deity is

humanity The foundation of his life is laid in the service of humanity The practice of *Ahimsa* and *Truth* is the guiding principle of his life The great man is himself a light-house who continues to guide mankind through the darkness of the world even after thousands of years after his death He is the greatest artist of the world Just as an artist makes beautiful statues out of shapeless stones, in the same way a great man, as an artist of humanity, would mould, mend and enlighten the undeveloped, uncultured, unprincipled and rigid humanity He raises man from the state of animalhood to that of godhood Such a man is the superman, the supreme among all

The Perfect Man

The perfect man is one who, breaking off all the fetters of attachment, attains the pinnacle of humanity He keeps himself away from the foul infection of passions, and lives in the fragrance of self-realisation

The Measurement of Greatness

Do you want to be great ? If so, control your desires Do not let them go uncontrolled , do not let them stray The greatness of man depends upon his capability to control his desires, and not in being controlled by them Before you put your foot upon the path of greatness, you must control and conquer all your desires and passions

The Ideal of Mahadeva

Everybody is eager to drink nectar But I want to become eternal and immortal by drinking poison I do not want a bed of flowers , I want the path strewn with

thorns I can walk more steadily in darkness than in light. I fear that pleasures and happiness might betray me I want sorrow, deep sorrow, fierce like tempests and burning like the forest-fire This sorrow will not let me sleep during my journey of life It will always keep me awake

Who is God ?

He who can fight against his passions and weaknesses is God. He should not only be able to fight against them but also to conquer them And this conquest should be a permanent conquest that may never again be converted into defeat

God is he who, at one time, may have been born as a man in the dark lanes of the world From this state of manhood he should have attained perfection. This state of perfection of man is the high state of Godhood

Is he a God who incarnates himself not only to destroy evil but also the evil-doer The destruction of the evil-doer before the destruction of evil is the common course adopted by all the people of the world What is the speciality of God in it ? God is he who destroyes the evil instinct in the evil-doer The Godhood of God should convert evil into goodness, poison into nectar

King of Kings

The ascetic alone is fearless in the world He is the king of kings What has he to care for ? What has he to worry about ? A sage rightly says about an ascetic :—
"He who is absolved of desires, of worries, of cares, and who wants nothing, is a king of kings."

Follow or Lead

You should either follow others, or make them follow you You have to choose one of these two courses If you do not like to follow others, and you do not have the capability of making others follow you, you are abnormal Then think about this situation carefully and judge yourself correctly

The Source of Greatness

Great men cannot be taught or tutored by external agencies The source of greatness lies hidden within their own self, which in course of time sprouts forth of itself Who teaches the rose to blossom forth ? Who teaches the nightingale to sing so sweet ? None, they are self-taught

Largeness of Heart

The greatness of man depends not on his being rich but on his being large-hearted Therefore Indian Philosophy and culture exhort every man to be large-hearted

Great Men and Opportunity

Common men are always looking for some great favourable opportunity to show off their greatness In this expectation they spend their whole life but such a great opportunity never comes in their life when they could do some thing great

But opportunities come unsought for to the great men. Not that great opportunities really come to them, but that they make small opportunities great Every moment of life is important, provided we can utilize it properly

4 Youth

Perennial Youth

It is necessary for preserving perennial youth that you should never allow any kind of weakness, disappointment or frustration to come to your mind Mental weakness is more injurious than physical weakness Ever-fresh zest for life is perennial youth, and it belongs to the mind, not to the body

Challenge

If tempests are coming, let them come Why should I fear them ? I am not a frail flame of candle that may be put out at a soft breeze of the wind I am a flaming fire that burns all the more powerfully by the gusts of wind, that advances forward, flaming and lighting others I heartily welcome sufferings and hardships , Let all sufferings, all hardships, all obstacles and failures come in my life They will all prompt me towards success rather than bend me

Dauntless Action

Action is supreme Dauntless action is the mightiest power You cannot even eat your food without raising

your hand The sleeping man is as good as dead Therefore wake up, gird up your loins and embark upon the journey of conquest He who makes sincere efforts must win in the end

Fate and Success

Today man is being badly ground under fatalism Everybody seems to say that he is suffering because he is destined to suffer What could he do ? Luck did not favour him, fate was against him

This only shows lack of manhood , this holds the black flag of frustration

Attachment to One's Country

Thousands of men fear, weep and hesitate to go out of their homes They have the desire to enjoy but lack the initiative necessary for it They have neither any courage nor zest for life Some people try to conceal this weakness of theirs behind the garb of love of the country. I would ask them Which is the country of the sun, the moon and the stars ? What countries are not theirs ? For those who want to go ahead, in sun and shade, in summer and winter, the whole world is their own country For the seekers of knowledge no country is a foreign country For men of action no country is too distant The noble sons are not those who, on account of their lethargy, would continue to drink the saline water of their ancestral well Noble sons are those who drink sweet water, however far they may have to go and whatever difficulties they may have to face for procuring it.

Brave and Coward

What is the difference between the brave and the coward ? The difference is just of one step Whereas the step of the brave always goes forwards, the step of the coward goes backwards The brave leaves the mark of his idealism on the battle-field, and attains immortality by embracing death The coward runs away from the battle-field and dies the death of a dog.

O, Man of Action !

Are you a brave man of action ? If so, why this lethargy ? Why this dosing and yawning ? For you the Himalayas are not too high, the oceans are not too deep If you just rouse your sleeping powers and collect them, the whole world will fawn at your feet If you wish you can convert hatred into love, animosity into sympathy, darkness into light, death into life, nay, hell into heaven

III

Penance

- GO AHEAD
  - FAITH
    - DEVOTION
      - KNOWLEDGE
        - RENUNCIATION
          - FEELINGS
            - SELF-PURIFICATION
              - INTROSPECTION

1. Go Ahead

Go Ahead

You have to this day adored innumerable gods and goddesses, you have worshipped countless bricks and stones, and you have bathed in numerous rivers and seas But what have you gained ? Not one bond of the soul has been broken, not one sorrow has been removed, not one black stain has been washed off Why are you unnecessarily groping in the dark ? Bring out the dormant power of your soul and proceed on the path of truth with courage and confidence Do not falter, do not fall, do not turn back, for the attainment of godhood is your birth-right No power of the world can hold you back from attaining this holy objective of yours

The Path of Penance

O ascetic, see that you do not drop out in the course of your penance Success is not an ordinary thing to be picked up from the lanes and alleys of any town It is the throe of the heart While treading on this path of penance, you have to melt yourself Do you not see that the sun has to contend with darkness the whole night before it rises on the peak of light and glory in the morning ?

Who is the True Devotee ?

The path which the devotee has to tread on is not the royal road decorated and strewn with beautiful and fragrant flowers It is a hard path It is strewn with thorns and sharp-edged pebbles that would make their feet bleed. It is attended by a series of heart-chilling accidents and events one after the other In the words of Kabir, the devotee must ever keep himself prepared to embrace death The devotee is the man who would tread on thorns, cross the oceans and rule over the storms He would tread over the peaks of the highest mountains Sorrow is his friend and happiness his enemy

Penance

Devotee, Deity and Devotion form the TRINITY of spiritual penance The devotee is the adorer, the deity is God and devotion is concentration When in the process of concentration the devotee identifies himself with the deity, and, severing all bonds of attachment and illusion, he merges himself with his deity, then alone he would taste the divine fruit of his penance The identification of the human soul with the soul divine is real devotion, real concentration The conversion of the soul into the soul divine, of the devotee into the deity is the attainment of God The more the devotee is devoted to his deity, the more concentration will he have and the more closely will he identify himself with the deity Without this identification the devotee cannot taste the nectar of penance or get liberated

Fear of Death

Are you aftraid of death, O ascetic ? Is death something to be feared ? No, you are mistaken Death is nothing but

a change He alone should fear this change (death) who is involved in sins, who is bereft of DHARMA, whose light of humanity has gone out and before whose eyes injustice, attachment and ignorance have drawn a curtain of darkness The change that leads you to the path of spiritual progress and which brings you to the portals of spiritual enlightenment should be heartily welcome If the highest spiritual ambition of your life has not been fulfilled in this life, it may be fulfilled in the life to come The spiritual light of your penance will continue to shine life after life

When Pandit Guru Dutt, the famous scholar and leader of Arya Samaj of Panjab was breathing his last, and when death was knocking at his door, people asked him, "Why are you so happy at this moment ?" He smiled and replied, "I could not be Dayanand in this life, but in the next and better life I shall try to be Dayanand" People were wonder-struck at this reply

Jaina scholars have also held a similar view One of them called death 'a great festival' Mahadevi Verma, the renowned poetess also says, "Take your barque to the sea, drown yourself in the sea if you want to cross it"

But if death appears to be a foe to you, and not a friend, then come forward, fight with it and conquer it, if you can Why are you afraid, why do you hesitate ? Do you think that if you tremble with fear and prostrate before it, death will spare you ? No, never, death will not spare anyone

2. Devotion

Devotion

Call it faith or devotion, it is the same thing The emotional impulse behind the penance of the devotee is faith If there is no faith, penance is a dead exercise

What is the difference between the living and the dead ? Where there is faith, devotion, adoration, there is life, three is universal good, there is God Where there is no faith, the soul is dead

Have Faith

You are a living soul You are not merely matter, not bricks and stones You should decide first what you want to be Whatever you want to be, you can be But the prerequisite for it is that you should have faith You should deserve it As soon as the bud blossoms forth into a flower, innumerable honey bees gather around it, singing songs in its praise uninvited

Faith

Faith is the greatest power in human life It is by the power of faith that man can win over his difficulties and attain the goal of his life A man of faith is never defeated,

is never tired He never fails, he never dies. Faith is an antidote against death. Faith is life, scepticism is death A man who has no faith in himself, no faith in others, no faith in the high ideals of life, cannot win the faith of anybody in the world He cannot be anybody's true friend

Faithful Allegiance

Once a great man happens to have the glimpse of truth, he sets out to pursue it ceaselessly and unflinchingly. Great men may wear away their body, even lose their life, but they will not deviate an inch from the path of truth They forget every other path except the path of truth In their dictionary there is no term like "Deserter of Faith"

Self-confidence

Faith in Self is faith in God He who has no faith in Self, who is weak and coward, can find no shelter anywhere Even the innumerable gods of heaven cannot make a cripple stand upon his legs

Individual Talents

The sun gives its light equally to all without favour or prejudice The ordinary mirror merely reflects its image and does nothing beyond it But the polished concave mirror or stone absorbs the rays of the sun and develops so much of heat that it can burn anything The sun cannot be blamed for this difference It depends upon the individual talents of the recipient If you live in the company of noble souls without developing any love or faith in them, you will get little

benefit from them, like the ordinary mirror But if you have love and faith, you can derive much benefit from them like the concave mirror

Constancy of Aim

Before you can do anything, you must fix up your aim or ideal You should know where you have to go and where you have not to go, what you have to do and what you have not to do, what you want to become and what you do not want to become Unless you have a clear picture of this, you will not be able to do anything or to become anything A painter, before he takes up his brush and colours to paint a picture, makes a clear impression in his mind what kind of picture he is going to paint In the same way, a sculptor, before he takes up his hammer, chisel and stone in the hand, makes a clear image of the statue that he is going to make Even the illiterate potter of the village knows beforehand what kind of pot he is going to make out of the clay in his hand Life is a great art Therefore you must have a clear idea what kind of life you are going to make for yourself You must have a target before you shoot the arrow If you go on shooting the arrow without any aim or target, you can never become a successful archer

Faith and Reason

The devotee must clearly demarcate the proper line between faith and reason Irrational faith is a dark bottomless pit. And reason bereft of faith will leave you stumbling among the rocks of scepticism and agnosticism Therefore faith and reason are inter-dependent and complementary to each other

Non-belief

At the time of sowing the farmer throws away the seeds into the soil He does so in a spirit of faith that the seeds would sprout forth in future If so, is it not desirable that you should also have faith while following the path of Dharma But it is regrettable that the sceptical man may have faith in every worldly affair, and may depend upon future hopes, but in matters of religion he wants the return of his good deeds immediately, this very day, this very moment Why this indecent haste to get the return of your deeds ! It shows utter lack of faith in the omnipotent and omniscient god

Scepticism

Scepticism is sin Scepticism breeds falsehood Where there is falsehood, there can be no Dharma The mind of the faithless sceptic is a dark bottomless pit in which scorpians, serpents and such other poisonous insects breed His heart is full of poison We should guard against such sceptics

Ideal and Practical

True ideal is that which can be adopted seriously and sincerely in practical life, and which may be firmly adopted for ever This ideal should not bend when hot winds of misfortunes blow, or get elated when gentle breezes of joy and happiness set in The ideal is beyond the narrow bounds of fear and allurements The real idealist is the man who will not deviate from his chosen path of truth even against the mightiest of storms of difficulties and hardships blowing against him.

3 Worship

Worship of the Self

O man, there is a god within you, there is a temple within your heart But you have never worshipped or adored that god

You have never rung the bells or blown the conches in adoration to the god within you There is fearful silence within the temple of your heart

You have never cleaned the temple of your heart So much of dirt has accumulated there ! The poor god has been submerged in the heap of rubbish Just clean the temple of your heart once, so that you may see the god within

The darkness within you is so intense that you can see nothing You light up candles and place them outside you Just carry one lighted candle within you and see what is there

There is no incense within you There is nothing but foul smell *Do you keep the temple of the god within you so* dirty ? You have never offered even one flower on this alter

Apply sandal upon the god within Offer him garlands of flowers

The worship of the Self is the worship of God The worship of the gods and goddesses outside is nothing but a network of illusion This network of illusion will weave fetters around your soul instead of liberating it

God and Devotee

The nearer you are, the more light you will get from fire You may call it favouritism or anything you choose The relationship between God and the devotee is of the same nature It is not so much the question of what you do or what you do not do , the question is how near to God you are There must be close proximity, not distance, between God and the devotee

True Worship

True worship of God does not consist in offering fruits and flowers or in lighting candles God's real worship is that man should follow the divine principles as laid down by the great seers Man should adopt and practise noble thoughts and noble ideals of life as laid down in the great religious scriptures This is the real worship of God

Actionism and Devotionalism

We act and we get the fruits of our actions This is the Jaina philosophy of actionism

God acts and God gets the fruits of his actions This is the Veshnava philosophy of devotionalism

The problems of life can be solved by either of these two philosophies, provided they are faithfully adopted and practised

in life Singleness of faith and devotion is the nectar of life and this can be obtained in either of the two ways mentioned above, if followed with faith and sincerity

The Secret of Devotionalism

Devotion is not slavery or surrender to the deity Devotionalism means the establishment of identification or oneness between the devotee and the deity

4. Knowledge

Oneness of Approach

The apparent distinctions that we find among mundane bodies are on account of the distinctions in their spheres and nature of actions. If we look deep into their pure soul or spirit, we shall find no distinction in them All souls are alike The true ascetic discovers this oneness behind the apparent diversity He considers all living beings as one and alike The ascetic who has cultivated this oneness of approach finds no difference between joy and sorrow or attachement and animosity

The oneness of approach establishes an unbounded dominion of equality and equanimity.

Light Up the Inner Flame

When the intense desire for self-purification and spiritual abvancement springs from within, then alone some substantial change in one's life and attitude can come, not otherwise No external power can forcibly bring about any change in one's outlook You see many moths burning themselves in the flame of the candle Kind-hearted people put out their candles in order to prevent the moths from burning themselves But the moths fly to other candles and burn there Therefore it is

necessary that the bud of inner consciousness must blossom forth into a flower, before you can accomplish anything If you are blind, you cannot see even if millions of suns may be shining in the sky

Study

Do you know what is the real meaning of study ? Study does not mean merely the reading of printed books Study really means the reading of the book of life It means the study of your own inner self The first and primary duty of man is to know himself and to adjudge himself correctly "Who am I, from where have I come, and what am I doing ?"—these are the questions which one must put to himself He who can give judicious replies to these qusstions has known everything All external study beyond the study of the Self is useless Real study also means the study of those great books and scriptures that are in consonance with the inner soul and which give out an image of the inner self But these are secondary sources of true study ? The primary study is the study of the Self

The Path of Progress

The soul of man is shrouded in the delusion and mist of name and form What is this world after all ? It is nothing but only a collection of false names and forms It is, therefore, necessary that these stumbling blocks that stand in the way of pure and holy living and which obstruct the march of spiritual progress should be rooted out

Peace and Happiness

Where is real peace, real happiness ? Does it depend upon material possessions ? Can happiness or peace be obtained by

amassing material things ? No, real peace is beyond these material possessions and their accumulation Real peace and happiness are contained in self-contentment and spiritual awakening

Inner Knowledge

Real knowledge does not consist in discovering the secrets of external nature Real knowledge is contained in knowing and realising the great secrets of life You have to know and test and judge the great secrets of inner life External nature is not so mysterious as inner consciousness

Ritualism and Discipline

The observance of rituals is a means and not an end in itself If the rituals do not make us humble and pure, and if they do not help us in self-realisation and self-purification, then they are not only useless but also a burden upon us

Matter and Consciousness

Your real self is that knows itself Who else can know it ? Imagine two brothers living together One of them has eyes to see and the other is blind I hope you understand who they are He who has eyes to see is Consciousness, and he who is blind is Matter This is the highest truth of life

Friend and Foe

People say that Rama killed Ravan But is it really true ? No, the killer of Ravan was Ravana himself, none else Man lives and dies, rises and falls according to his own good or

bad conduct This is an eternal truth which we must know We must know the foe that dwells within us

Deep Meditation

Practise deep meditation Your meditation should be so deep and pointed that it may penetrate to the secrets of the soul and non-soul matters The sharp pointed nail of steel can pierce anything, but the blunted iron bar can pierce nothing Likewise your meditation must be deep, pointed and sharp in order to discover the mystery of life

5 Renunciation

Renunciation

When you stand upon the peak of a high mountain, you find everything below you in its diminutive form In the same way, the ascetic who stands upon the high peak of spiritual consciousness finds all the pleasures and glory of life, all considerations of honour, prestige, enjoyment and indulgence as useless and insignificant The plesasures and possessions of the world have importance to those who are attached to them, but for those who are spiritually above them, they have no significance

Worldly Glory

Just raise yourself above your worldly desires and ambitions The moment you do so in a spirit of detachment, all the coveted things will automatically come to you Worldly glory is like but the shadow of your body If you run after your shadow to catch it, you will never succeed in your efforts, for your shadow will recede farther and farther as you run after it But if you turn your back at it and return, the shadow will automatically follow you

The Curiosity of Man

Innumerable flowers bloom, scatter their fragrance and fade away Has anybody written or read the life history of any of them ? Has any flower claimed that the world has received inspiration from it ? If none, why should man alone have this desire ? We become highly desirous of hearing songs of our praise after doing a little good work We wish that our names be written in letters of gold in the books of history Man thinks that the coming generations will receive inspiration from his life and achievements But he forgets that there are many more as talented as himself and who have done even more work

Our Aim

When we turn towards our soul, we rise higher But when we think of the body and of nothing else, we fall below and stumble This is enough for you to understand and decide whether you want to rise or fall

The Secret of Life

You have seen bubbles of water floating and frolicking upon the surface of water They rise, emerge to the surface, float for some time and then suddenly burst and disappear in the water Their life is so short and meaningless ! Is not the life of man equally short-lived and meaningless ? The secret of human life is contained in the life of these bubbles

Love of Existence

Just imagine a hillock in the mid-stream of a river The waves of the river have been constantly striking against it for

a long time The hillock is wearing away, particle by particle, and thus consuming up its existence

Are we not all like that small hillock in the eternal stream of time ? Like the hillock we are all wearing away every second Are we in any way safer and securer than the hillock ? I believe, we are not

How Insignificant is Man !

Man builds palatial buildings and fixes up huge marble slabs with detailed inscriptions in self-praise He feels elated to see those stones and marbles and believes that they will make his memory immortal

But what is the value of this vanity ? Man is no more than a particle of dust in a limitless universe, and his life is a small drop of water in the unbounded ocean of eternity Is this brief and insignificant life something to feel proud of ?

The Saw of Life

Man breathes in and breathes out This process has been going on regularly for many years But man does not know what it really means This is, in fact, the saw of time cutting the throat of life It is cutting the life of man moment by moment People believe that breathing is an indication of life, but I say that it is an indication of approaching death

Non-attachment

Don't be the honey-bee Don't get stuck to the pleasures of life, like the honey-bee sticking to the flower, from

which you may never detach yourself. Be a fly sitting upon the crystal of sugar, tasting it but free to fly away whenever it chooses to do so

Imagine a bird sitting on the branch of a tree If the branch breaks down it causes no harm to the bird The bird flies up in the sky But if there is a monkey in place of the bird, it will fall down on the earth along with the branch of the tree The monkey cannot fly up in the sky In the same way, there are two types of men sitting upon the branch of the huge tree of the world He who is attached to the world is like the monkey When his possessions slip away from his grasp, he falls down, weeps, cries and repents The non-attached man is like the bird who flies up when his possessions slip away from his hold He dwells in the world in a spirit of detachment He takes the gains and losses in life as a mere sport Therefore nothing can cause him pain

The Centre of Happiness

Where is happiness ? It is not to be found in the possession of material things but in their renunciation The sensuous pleasure that you get through the fulfilment of your worldly desires is not real happiness This enjoyment is mixed with sorrow, and it is no more than a shadow of true happiness Real happiness lies not in fulfilling your desires but in renouncing them Falling ill and recovering from it is not a mark of good health Good health implies that one should not fall ill at all Therefore real happiness is that which brings real peace to the human heart Peace is there in the heart of the man whose mind is not restless This in its turn means the man who has no desire for mundane pleasures Again, he alone will forbear such desire who is

non-attached to the worldly possessions This non-attachment to the world is an attribute of the man whose vision is clear and who, therefore, is not torn between joy and sorrow, loss and gain, love and hatred Such a man is real saint, the saintliest of the saints, God incarnate He is *Sachidananda,* Happiness incarnate—ALL-TRUTH, ALL-ETERNAL and ALL-JOY

6. Feeling

I am soul I possess all the imperishable glory and radiance of God I am myself the architect of my fate How can I be the toy in the hands of others ? No, never, it is not possible

Thought and Life

Your future is contained in your present thoughts Whatever you think of yourself today, whatever you meditate upon, that you will exactly be tomorrow If you think yourself to be low, mean and sinning, you will soon be really low, mean and sinning On the other hand, if you think yourself to be noble, good and holy, you will indeed be noble, good and holy very soon Man's life is the image of his thoughts A philosopher rightly says, "Fate is another name for thought "

Know Yourself

Why do you believe yourself to be low, helpless and sinning ? Essentially you are holy, enlightened, pure, and noble, a spark of God Just brush away the dust of your weaknesses and passions that has deposited upon your soul, and then you will see that you are not low or insignificant

in any way No glory is greater than the glory of the soul ; no halo brighter than the halo of the innerself.

Sthita-Pragya (Ever-constant)

I am unborn, immortal, infinite I am the God of Hindus, Muslims and Christians I am neither born nor do I die. I am beyond the powers of death My glory transcends all limits of time and space I am Divine Conflagration, unlimited and infinite

I am saint, true saint I look upon joys and sorrows of life with equanimity Neither honour nor dishouour can shake me I am subject to neither joy nor sorrow, nor loss nor gain, nor life nor death I have learnt to perceive equal beauty in both life and death I am STHITA PRAGYA, unchanging, ever-constant

Purity of Heart

The heart of man is a field in which the seeds of good and evil are sown As you sow, so will you reap It is not possible that you should sow thorny bushes and reap the harvest of sweet fruits If you want to have a harvest of good fruits, then sow good seeds Lord Mahavira says, "Good actions bear good fruits bad actions bear bad fruits"

If you ask the waterman what kind of water is there in his bucket, the waterman would reply, "The water in my bucket is the same as is there in the well" It is not possible that the water in the bucket should be different from the water of the well from which it has been filled Human heart is a well full of the water of thoughts It is the thoughts of your mind that find expression in your speech, and

they are later translated into your actions Therefore, if you want to make your speech and actions holy, the prerequisite for it is to keep your heart holy The basis of your conduct is your thought Thoughts are born in the soil of the heart Therefore if you want to emanate the fragrance of good conduct, fill your heart with holy thoughts and noble determination

Thought-Wave

Blessed will be the day when we shall be able to break away from the cycle of joy and sorrow, and rise above the plane of life and death It will be on that day that we shall be able to see the infinite beauty and glory of our soul

Feeling

The heart of man is an arena of conflict between good and evil Blessed will be the day when man comes out triumphant from this eternal conflict of good and evil It is this conquest which will make you man in the real sense

7 Self-Purification

Be Thy Innerself

Soul is above the plane of joy and sorrow of the world It is not confined within the circumference of good and evil, merits and demerits, or time and space Soul is ever-beautiful, ever-new, ever-fresh, eternal and immortal No worldly things or bondages can ever stain or darken its glory

Outer-self, Inner self and Supreme-self

The feeling of possession and egoism with regard to the mundane things of the world point to our outerself The feeling of inner-purification and self-realisation is our innerself And, the complete and perfect knowledge of the innerself is the supreme-self Outer-self is extrovert Innerself is introvert, but it is incomplete The supreme-self is introvert and perfect, pure and serene

Be Thou God

A philosopher propounding the philosophy of actionism says, "We want to taste the crystal of sugar, but we do not want to become the crystal itself" It means we want to have the blessed vision of God but we do not want to become God Himself I do not at all agree with this philosophy of life

I would rather say, "I want to taste the crystal of sugar, but at the same time I also want to become the crystal itself The crystal of sugar symbolises the possession of infinite spiritual flavour and sweetness I want to taste this sweetness of my own soul Why should I depend upon the sweetness in other things I would not merely taste sweetness, I would become sweetness The real pleasure is in becoming the king and not merely in seeing the king"

God is within you You cannot find Him in any place outside yourself If it is so, who should you worship and why should you worship ? This is a question that has been coming down since time immemorial It is our basic question, concerning our ownself and our soul This is why *Shramana Sanskriti* does not so much prompt you towards outwardly worshipping and adoring gods, it rather prompts you to know your own soul and meditate upon it with all your power of concentration

Progress is the Natural Attribute of the Soul

Some preachers, philosophers and thinkers hold the following view "It is easy for man to fall but difficult to rise Fall is natural and easy, rise is unnatural and difficult In brief, fall is a part of our nature, and rise is alien to our nature" Those who hold this view are groping in the dark They have no message to give to inspire mankind If fall is natural to man and rise is unnatural, why should we preach morality, and why should we make so much of hue and cry about man's spiritual elevation ? Nobody can go or act against his nature Nobody can abandon his natural self Lord Mahavira was, however, opposed to this kind of philosophy He rather believed that progress is natural

and easy and fall is unnatural and hard for man Progress is a part of human nature and fall is alien to it The conversion of anger, pride, ignorance and greed into forgiveness, humility, simplicity and generosity is innate to human nature For this no external aid is needed On the contrary, it is unnatural and difficult for man to fall into anger, pride and animosity For this some external circumstance is needed A gourd floats on water naturally Floating is innate to its nature It does not need any external aid to float On the contrary, it would need some external weight to sink into the water If we tie a piece of stone with it, it would sink It does not sink of itself, it is made to sink under the weight of the stone

This equally applies to the human soul It is natural for the human soul to float upon the ocean of the world Sinking into the ocean of the world is unnatural to it If it sinks, it does so under the weight of human weaknesses, temptations and evil actions If we keep off all these evils and temptations from our soul, it would keep on floating, and cross the ocean of life without any fear of its sinking on the way

Self-purification

Soul is intrinsically great, pure and clean It is, however, submerged in the mire of evils and passions, and therefore it remains so suppressed and cast down Like a piece of gold lying in mud, it loses all its natural lustre Therefore whenever it seeks to rise above this mundane plane and steer clear through the ocean of the world, it has to take the difficult path of truth, non-violence and penance On this arduous path of purification, it sometimes stumbles into pitfalls of evil thoughts and temptations But an ascetic

should not feel discouraged or frustrated by such occasional pitfalls Having full faith in the essential purity and nobility of the soul, he must keep on advancing, step by step, on the path of purification, and he will attain the goal in the end

And of course, one more thing should be kept in mind Weeping and crying over your mistakes will do you no good If you have committed some error or mistake, you must try to find out the root cause that led you to it, and with determination you must root out that cause Hence Jaina philosophy enjoins upon man as much to make efforts to purify himself as to guard against such pitfalls that often tempt in this process of purification This process of self-purification gradually cleanses away all the stains and spots that may have tarnished the soul Gradually this process brings you nearer and still nearer to the portals of heaven and sets you on the path of liberation

Inner Cleaning

On the festival of Diwali the goddess Laxmi is worshipped in every house For this the house is cleaned and all dirt is thrown out All houses are white-washed and coloured, so that they all put up a new face Now I would ask you just one simple question You have cleaned your house, but have you ever considered how much dirt has accumulated in the temple of your heart ? What a dirt, what foul smell and what heaps of rubbish have accumulated there ? So long as your heart is dirty or black, the goddess Laxmi can never enter there She would retrace her steps at the foul smell of evil deeds coming from your heart However, if by any mis-chance she happens to get into

your heart, she will herself become a dirty and foul witch And you all know what happens when a witch enters your house and dwells there

Conquest of the Self

If you seek to conquer your Self, you must so discipline yourself as to keep yourself away and above the fray of joy and sorrow, loss and gain, honour and dishonour You must first conquer your passions and desire for pleasures

Soul

Soul is the Conscious Power that governs and guides your body, your speech, your mind and your heart You may call it JEEVA or BRAHMA The soul is the centre of all knowledge and bliss If the soul is healthy and pure, and if there are no temptations in it there can be no sorrow for man Then man would feel the freshness of a cool bath even while burning in the flames of fire Even while treading upon thorns, he will feel the soft touch of flowers

Break the Outer Crust

Self-realisation does not come from without, it comes from within Break the hard crust of the physical and sensuous temptations and weaknesses that have deposited within you, and you will see the radiance of self-realisation, the radiance of your soul

The Highest Ideal

What is the highest ideal before man ? The highest ideal before man is to keep himself pure and clean, to make

himself complete and perfect, and to raise himself from manhood to godhood The *Garuda* aims to soar to the snow-capped peaks of the mountains, while mosquitoes and flies hover around the heeps of rubbish only Thus, whereas man is externally just like a fly or a mosquito, internally he is as great as the *Garuda* He can attain the height of spiritual greatness

Soul and Body

The soul is immortal and body ephemeral Soul is eternal and body short-lived Soul is holy, body is unholy Soul is not subject to disease, sorrow, grief and struggle of life , body is chained down in them

Self-realisation and Time

How much time is needed for self-realisation ? In fact, this question is irrelevant Incalculable time has already passed, but we have not been able to obtain even one spark of light When the flash of spiritual light comes, it comes in a moment When you awake from your sleep of thousands of years, you do not take more than a few minutes Does man take years in waking up ?

Asceticism of the Modern Age

Imagine a man going to the ocean of nectar carrying with him a broken pitcher to fill it from the ocean So long as the pitcher remains immersed in the holy ocean, it appears to be full of the nectar, but as soon as it is lifted up, it becomes empty Modern ascetics are almost in the same plight They do not close the holes of weaknesses and temptations in their life and conduct, and they hope to fill the pitcher of their soul with the nectar of spirituality How can it be possible ?

8. Introspection

You are Omnipotent

You have powers of Mahavira, Buddha, Rama, Krishna, Christ, Mohammad and all other great men ever born in the world Just think for a while with a cool head what you want to be Then whatever you want to be, you will be, if you have faith and determination

Withdraw the Veil

The desire for personal gain, attachment and selfishness draws a veil of darkness around the soul of man This veil makes him blind and deflects him from the path of truth It does not let him decide what is really good for him Remove this veil of selfishness and let the light of truth illumine your heart Whatever decisions you will then take in the light of the truth will be in the interest of all, and therefore good for all

The Inner Flame

Man, you should know that you have a lighted candle of spirituality within you. You have only to remove the extinguisher from the flame The flame is lighted , you have

only to remove the outer covering by your determined asceticism and penance

Be Introvert

Soul, you have nothing to do with the conflicts of the mundane world You should look within, and not without See yourself, and not others He who sees others is a beggar, and he who sees himself is a king, an emperor

The Source of Happiness

The perennial source of real joy is within you in your soul It is not in the body, not in your senses, not in your wealth or your people It is nowhere else

Know Thyself

Man, open your eyes, wake up and go ahead If you recognise your own power and greatness, you will be able to convert hell into heaven by a mere nod of your head Your powers cannot be calculated in numerical figures For them there is only one word—INFINITE

You are Soul, and yet you fear, you tremble You have a glory that even the sun or moon does not possess You have a power incomparable in the world

Who are you ?

You are neither man nor woman, neither *Brahman* nor *Shudra*, neither master nor slave You are pure soul, holy, enlightened, eternal, immortal, without form, without shape Do you believe that you are your temporal self bound within your weaknesses and temptations ? If you believe so, nobody can be more foolish than you

Self-meditation

Man, just think who you are Where have you come from ? What for have you come ? What are you doing in this life ? Why are you doing what you are doing ? Where have you to go and when ? What have you gained or lost ? How far have you advanced or gone backwards ? How much of animalism do you carry with you or how much of god-hood do you have within you ? These are the questions which need to be carefully considered by you Meditate upon them with all your power of concentration

Feeling

You are Soul whom no eye can see, no ear can hear, no nose can smell or tongue taste or fingers touch Nay, even the mind that claims to comprehend and know everything, fails to understand you You have to comprehend and understand yourself When will you set out to do so ?

Know Yourself

Know that you have infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite wisdom You are not meant to remain immersed within the mire of mundane pleasures and indulgences You are *Garuda*, the mighty bird Therefore fly up, soar to the highest point of infinite spiritual powers

Soul is Omnipotent

A shepherd found the cub of a lion and brought him home and placed him in the herd of his goats and sheep The cub of lion began to believe that he was one of the goats and sheep But once he heard a lion roaring at the

herd and he saw the goats and sheep running helter and skelter in fear Immediately he realised what he was He himself also roared and the goats and sheep fled away from him Soul, you are also a lion, but you have forgotten your identity in the company of mundane things You have only to roar just once, and all your mundane weaknesses and temptations will disappear

See the Seer

It is not the eye that sees The eye is only a window through which some other Power sees That great power can see whether your eyes are open or closed, whether you are sleeping or awake Therefore see the Seer, who is the seer of all

IV

Shramana Sanskriti

- SANSKRITI
  - JAINISM
    - BE THOU GOD
      - ACTIONISM

1. Shramana Sanskriti

The Message of Mahavira

The message of Lord Mahavira, the preceptor of *Shramana Sanskriti* is that anger should be conquered by forgiveness, pride by humility, conceit by simplicity and greed by contentment

When we succeed in conquering animosity by love, opposition by friendship, ignobility by nobility, then alone we can claim to be true followers of our Dharma and be men in the true sense

Shramana Sanskriti

The solemn message of *Shramana Sanskriti* has been resounding in the hearts of men for thousands of years It holds that human life is not meant to be wasted in groping in the dark lanes and alleys of the world, or in remaining immersed in the dirty gutters of mundane pleasures and indulgences Man, the aim of your life is to know yourself, your humanity You possess the ideals of humanity that are nobler and higher than the highest peak of the Himalayas. Knowing this, will you keep groping in the by-ways and whirlpools of desires—the desire for sons, for wealth, for worldly recognition ?

No, you are a pilgrim bound for a destination beyond which there remains no more distance to cover In the words of a poet, "The aim of life is not to sit and take rest in pleasure-palaces , the aim of life is to keep on advancing forward until you reach a destination beyond which there is no more going "

Great Culture

It has become a fashion today to speak highly of one's own culture and civilization Man has gone crazy in this mad pursuit There has long been a sort of tug of war between different cultures and civilizations But the controversy as to which of them is the best culture can be settled through just one simple question, provided the reply to the question is given with all sincerity The question is whether your culture is prompted by the urge to promote universal good and universal happiness, whether it urges man to raise himself from the plane of self-interest to the plane of universal interest, whether your culture is capable of kindling the ray of hope for all in the surrounding darkness of ignorance and sorrow You have to consider whether your culture has been sincerely making efforts to raise man from the mundane plane to the spiritual plane If your culture sincerely answers to these questions in the affirmative, then you can undoubtedly claim that your culture is the best of all Then your culture is really entitled to claim to be the culture of the whole world That culture alone can occupy the sovereign throne in the monarchy of cultures which has these broad and high ideals, and which may lead man to the climax of spiritual development

The Message of Shramana Sanskriti

The message of *Shramana Sanskriti* is that there is greater happiness in giving than in taking, in renunciation than in indulgence

Shramana Sanskriti and the Sinner

Shramana Sanskriti believes in the power of converting the devil into man Its ideal is not destruction but reformation It believes not in the theory of retribution but reclamation A system of punishment that has no compassion for the sinner, no urge for reformation, and which is guided only by the desire for revenge, is no good system of justice It is itself a sin, a crime When your clothes become dirty, you don't destroy them You only clean them to wear again Man also becomes dirty through his sins. Therefore the sinner should be cleansed by love and sympathy and he should be set on the right path of truth and human service *Shramana Sanskriti* treats the sinner with sympathy and compassion It treats the sinner just in the way in which we treat a patient Sin is also a kind of mental disease and therefore it needs to be cured, not punished

Man and the Invisible Power

No invisible power rules over the life of man Man is not a toy in the hands of any external power He is an independent mighty power in himself He alone can change himself and his society and his country In fact, he can change the whole world It will be no difficult task for man even to change hell into heaven

Socialism and Shramana Sanskriti

I am not afraid of socialism. Non-acquisition is the basic governig principle of *Shramana Sanskriti*, which is also the governing principle of socialism The theory of non-acquisition upheld in *Shramana Sanskriti* is nothing but socialism.

The ideal of *Shramana Sanskriti* is to take as little as possible and to give as much as possible. The basic concept of the theory of non-acquisition propounded by *Shramana Sanskriti* is to curb and control our necessities and desires as much as possible, and not to hoard anything beyond our just requirements It preaches that man should give more attention to the hunger and poverty of others than to his own It teaches man to live for others, not for himself These are the governing principles of *Shramana Sanskriti*

The message of "Live and let live" has been resounding for millions of years in the history of *Shramana Sanskriti* This is just the slogan of socialism too The only difference is that socialism in practice today works through violence, hatred, oppression and class struggles Our approach is different It is our duty that we should win over the feelings of animalism and learn to live in a happy atmosphere of love and friendship and mutual cooperation We have to start a campaign for universal fraternity and peaceful co-existence We have to replace dictatorship by welfare state We have to recognise the independent entity of the individual This will be the Indianization of socialism

2. Jainism

Jainism and Renunciation

Jainism believes in sacrifice and renunciation It does not exhort its devotees to burn themselves in fire or to drown in rivers or to jump down from the peaks of mountains or to melt themselves in snow It is no renunciation to endure hunger, thirst, cold or heat If this were real sacrifice and renunciation, then the prisoners always practise them But real renunciation means getting liberated from the fetters of desires An ascetic gives no importance to life or death What is really important for him is to get liberated from the prison-house of desires

Jain Sanskriti and Humanity

Jain Sanskriti is the Sanskriti of humanity The highest aim of Jain Sanskriti is to reach to the climax of spiritual development for the good of all This is why every word in Jain philosophy and literature is touched and electrified with the urge to make life holy and good

Jainism and Casteism

Jainism is not the religion of any particular man, or caste or sect It belongs to him who is prepared to adopt

it sincerely, whoever he is, whether a Brahman, a Shudra, a Hindu or a Muslim, or whether he is Indian or a foreigner Every human being has equal right on it

Jainism

Jainism is the religion of humanity It exhorts man to tread on the path of humanity And, what is humantiy after all ? Humanity is nothing but the art and power of adaptability to live with man as man

Jain Sanskriti and Actionism

Jain Sanskriti is largely the philosophy of actionism It would ask the disappointed and frustrated man why he is so dependent upon fate ? What is fate ? It is nothing but the reward of your past actions Therefore you can come out of the whirlpool of fate by doing noble actions If you do not do so, your life will bring you down under the heavy load of *Karmas* and reduce you into ashes

Equitable Distribution

All the men living in the world have equal right to share the amenities available in the world No single individual, caste, society or nation has any right to monopolize them Permanent peace can be established in the world if all the available amenities are justly and equitably distributed among the people of the world While distributing them, we should consider every man as our own brother both in thought and practice He who enjoys all by himself commits a great sin, a great crime Lord Mahavira says that it may be possible for anybody to get liberated, but he who does not practise the principle of

equitable distribution has absolutely no chance of getting his liberation

There is no sense of humanity or justice in you, if you eat more than what is necessary, wear and hoard more than what is necessary, while your own real brother is starving and going unclad You should not, serpent-like, keep all the material possessions within your own coils Excessive acquisition dehumanises man and makes him a monster. The higher sense of humanity enjoins upon every man to reduce his own necessities and desires and share with others whatever you have got This is the basic principle of the religion of humanity

Jain Ahimsa

The concept of Jain Ahimsa is so subtle and vast that most people believe that it is impossible and unpracticable But this is not the real truth about Jain Ahimsa TAN-YOU-SHAN, a famous Chinese philosopher, refuting this charge against Jain Ahimsa says that it appears difficult and unpracticable to us because we have not been able to raise ourselves to that level When humanity has risen to that spiritual height, Jain Ahimsa will not only be respected but also adopted by the people in life

The message of Lord Mahavira is still resounding in the world He says, "Let every individual make himself universal "

Jainism and the Religion of Soul

Jainism is the religion of the liberated self. Therefore it has no place for communal or sectarian conflicts and

prejudices He who has no attachment even with his body can certainly have no attachment with the external symbols of religion. *Dharma* is related with the soul It is concerned neither with the body nor with the external symbols painted on the body. The monasteries, temples and mosques do not fall within its purview

The Tenets of Jainism

Jain philosophy exhorts you to overcome the struggle of life It enjoins upon us to fight the battle of life on the one hand and on the other to control the temptations and weaknesses of the self by treading on the path of penance and asceticism At the same time it also enjoins upon us to root out social evils, injustice and exploitation, and to establish permanent peace in the world

Opposition to injustice in every form and all-out efforts to root out injustice from society is not a sin but a holy action All that is necessary is that your efforts should be prompted by a desire for universal good.

Universality of Jainism

Every living creature has equal right on Jainism There are no restrictions of caste, sect or nationality in it It is all-embracing and universal and therefore we have no right to confine it within any particular country, or caste or sect. It is a soft morning breeze that must refresh all.

3. Be Thou God

You are God

O man, your True Self is within you, not without You are yourself a living God Just keep yourself in discipline, and then whatever you wish, will happen.

Entire Responsibility is Yours

Are you looking for some god of destiny ? Can anybody or any power outside yourself decide and determine your destiny ? Can somebody else rewrite the book of your life ? You stand upon your feet and you walk upon your feet, and so you alone can reach your destination As you will, so will you be Heaven and hell are both within you In metaphysical terms, noble thoughts make heaven and mean thoughts make hell within you

Soul is God

According to Jain philosophy, soul is different from both the body and the senses It is different from the mind and heart also Whatever it is, it is certainly beyond this mould of clay, your body Being born it is unborn, being subjected to death, it is immortal

Some people believe that soul is a spark and a fragment of God. The fact is that the soul is neither a fragment nor a spark of any God The soul is all-holy and complete within itself If it is helpless, powerless and lustureless today, it is just on account of the dark veil of ignorance that we have woven around it Once we remove this veil, it will acquire its innate spiritual lustre It will begin to shine with the lustre of enlightenment

True Knowledge

Knowledge for the sake of knowledge is meaningless The importance of knowledge lies in building up your character A great sage says, "Those who acquire knowledge for the sake of knowledge remain lost in darkness"

Your Honour in Your Own Hand

You often complain that nobody honours you, nobody recognizes you But what is the gain in complaining against the people or quarrelling with them on this point First make yourself worthy and perfect and then you will get whatever you wish The diamond has to prove its genuineness first and then a throne of gold in the ring is automatically prepared for it to sit upon

Life Why and for Whom ?

Imagine a rose flower blossomming and scattering its fragrance in some dark valley of the mountains I would go to the flower and ask, "Why do you bloom here ? There is none to see your beauty or enjoy your fragrance After all what is your use here ?"

The flower would reply, "I do not bloom that somebody should come to see my beauty and enjoy my

fragrance. I do so because it is a part of my nature, whether anybody sees me or not, I must bloom and smile"

This sets me thinking . "Can man learn the philosophy of selfless and detached service from this little flower ?"

For Whom ?

The sun and the moon shine to give light to the world Trees and plants bear fruits and flowers to give pleasure to others Rivers carry sweet water to quench the thirst of others Can man also learn to live for others ?

Realization of God

Whether spiritual development is taking place within a man or not can be easily tested When you develop forgiveness in place of anger, humility in place of pride, simplicity in place of vanity, contentment in place of greed, then you are on the road to spiritual development It is in these moments that you can realize God

4. Actionism

Reward According to Your Actions

He who sets fire, gets fire in return, and he who wields the sword is killed by the sword He who scatters thorns in the way of others, can never get a bed of flowers to sleep upon The bed of flowers is given to him who brings flowers to others

Actionism

Actionism requires great patience and courage on the part of the ascetic When we suffer on account of our own evil deeds in the past, we must endure our suffering with patience and forbearance Whom can we blame for our sufferings ? The belief that if we do noble actions, the remaining period of our present life and our future life will be happy, encourages us with new spirit for noble deeds In the same way, when we know that it is on account of their past evil deeds that poeple suffer in this life and get addicted to many bad habits, we feel pity and compassion instead of hatred and rancour towards them, and this prompts us to relieve their sufferings

Man has committed innumerable sins, crimes and deeds of injustice and exploitation in the name of God and

His apostles This Man does with impunity because he believes that he has his defender in God himself Why should he fear then ? Christ says, "I mount the scaffold to redeem the sinners of the world" Islam says, "On the Day of Judgment, when God sits in judgment on the souls, He would ask Mohammad's opinion And he whom Mohammad recommends would be absolved of all his sins And whom will Mohammad recommend ? Indeed him who had faith in God and in Mohammad himself" Lord Krishna also says the same thing, "I shall absolve you of all your sins, and therefore you need not worry"

In the cultural and religious history of the world, Lord Mahavira and Buddha are the only two great apostles who hold no such false promise to man Lord Mahavira says, "No God or angel can liberate you from your sins You will have to bear the consequences of your deeds Your own good conduct alone can save you"

Thus *Shramana Sanskriti* exhorts you not to evade the consequences of your evil deeds, but to keep yourself away from sins

V

Dharma and Adharma

- DHARMA
  - ADHARMA
    - BASIC ELEMENTS OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT
      - KNOWLEDGE AND RITUALS

1. Dharma

Love of Humanity

The highest religion and highest level of humanity is the realisation of the inherent oneness between yourself and all the living creatures of the world The root cause of all the conflicts in the world is that you remain confined within your own small self and personal interests Most of the difficulties and hardships spring from those who do not own others and who bear no real love for others

Religion and External Appearance

O man, what are you doing ? Does your religion depend on the lock of hair on the head or beard on the chin, or on the discipline of the kitchen, or the bearing of sandal marks and holy thread ? Is that all your religion ? You cannot bind the infinite and eternal religion within any set limits of external paraphernalia or rituals

Universal Fraternity

True religion does not consist in any set system of rituals It depends upon your efforts to give to the small drop of love within your heart the dimensions of a sea. Universal love is the path of religion

Jainism says, "You should consider and love all the creatures of the world as you consider and love your soul Seek your own self in every living creature"

The Spirit of Religion

A religion that is propagated by the power of the sword can never be a true religion In the same way, a religion that is promoted through temptations of gold and silver can have no true religious spirit in it True religion transcends all considerations of fear and temptations, and it promotes the feelings of asceticism, renunciation, universal fraternity and love

Religion Joins It does not Sever

A religion that gets defiled by taking food at one place or the other, or by touching one man or the other, and which differentiates between man and man, is no religion , it is a negation of religion, a great sin The function of religion is to join and weave the different links of humanity into a wreath, and not to throw them asunder

Truth

Truth is a flaming spark It can burn into ashes thousands of tons of wood of falsehood It is a divine flame of fire which can burn away all sins and evils It lightens up life with a divine spiritual lustre

The Setting of Fire is Beyond Us

The religion that believes in arson and murders is no religion at all True religion should quench the flaming

blazes of hatred and animosity by the water of love and compassion The true followers of religion would sing only one hymn · We quench fire , the setting of fire is beyond us

What does Religion ask ?

True religion does not ask you whether you are a householder or an ascetic It would only ask you how far you have been able to curb and control your pride, your vanity, your greed, your desires

The Test of Religion

Religion cannot be tested by the touch-stone of antiquity or modernity The importance of religion lies in its power to infuse the spirit of service and dedication in your heart, in your traditions, in your character and conduct, and not in its being old or new

The Aim of Religion

What is the aim of religion ? Its aim is to liberate you from your weaknesses, temptations and passions Finally, it seeks to liberate you from the cycle of birth and death

The Observance of Religion

Does your observance of religion protect you from the poisonous currents of hatred, animosity and greed ? It should. If it does not, it is time when you should consider wherein lies the fault

Religion and Sect

There is a great difference between religion and sect If sect is the body, religion is its soul , if sect is the pond,

religion is the water in it , if sect is the flower, religion is the fragrance in it , if sect is the fruit, religion is the juice in it A sect bereft of religion is poison for the human race, and the earlier it is given up, the better would it be for mankind

Religion and Life

Religion and duty are not a feast to be enjoyed only on particular holy or festive days in the company of your friends It is a daily food which you need in your day-to-day life As a matter of fact, it is fresh air without which you cannot live even for a moment Truth should be worshipped every day Those who wait for the full-moon or no-moon nights, or for particular days like Sundays or Tuesdays or Fridays for the worship of Truth can never really worship Truth They worship only the semblance of Truth

Dharma and Adharma

Inner consciousness is religion , outer consciousness is negation of religion This is the formula which can be further expanded thus If you are advancing towards non-violence, truth, continence, pity, compassion, forgiveness, good conduct, contentment, asceticism and renunciation, you are advancing towards religion But if you drift away from these attributes of inner discipline and subject yourself to anger, vanity, greed, attachment, hatred and animosity, you are drifting farther and farther away from religion The real spirit of religion does not depend upon the observance of external rituals It is found in the inner enlightenment of man Inner consciousness and awakening is true religion If your inner self remains asleep, it is a mark of *Adharma*

Religion and Temptations

A religion that frightens you with the horrors of hell on the one hand and tempts you with the pleasures of heaven on the other, can do no good to humanity True religion sings the hymns of eternal truth It neither frightens you nor tempts you

Truth and Sect

Truth is no truth if it can be confined within the limits of an individual or a sect Truth is infinite and unconfined It cannot be confined within any set of sectarian beliefs and rituals

The Highest Religion

What is the highest religion in the world ? A religion that keeps you contented with your inner self, and which keeps you away from the temptations of the outer self, is the highest religion

One Sword in One Sheath

Rama and Ravana cannot occupy the same throne No, they cannot If it is so, how can God and Devil be installed at the same time on the throne of your heart You have to choose one between God and Devil You will have to part with one of them How can God enter your heart so long as the Devil is already there ? If you seek to install Rama on the throne of your heart, you will have to expel Ravana from there

Love and Lust

Love is that which does not at all smack of lust or passion or evil intention It is clear, pure and pious like the

Ganges Lust, on the other hand, is quite different from love Lust is that which has the foul element of passion and sensuality in it Lust is all selfishness , it has no urge for service

Religion and Rituals

Good conduct and discipline are the essential elements of religion They are inner attributes Rituals are a manifestation of the external paraphernalia which everybody can see and know For the protection of the religious spirit within, this outer covering may semetimes be necessary But it is not the whole truth about religion If we receive a beautiful coloured envelope, but on opening it we find no letter in it, it will be so ridiculous This is exactly the case with modern religions They have great external paraphernalia, but no real spirit within

External Rituals

External rituals without inner purificaton are as meaningless as a beautiful dead body How long can the external beauty of the body last without the spark of life in it Mere external beauty is destined to wear out sooner or later Similarly, a religion which is all rituals must decay and wear out in course of time

Religionless Sect

A sect or faith or belief bereft of religion is like the dead body without soul The soulless body cannot last , it decays In the same way, religionless sect cannot purify life On the contrary, it dies its own death, and also ruins those who follow it

The Secret of Religion

What does religion teach you ? Does it show the right path to those who have gone astray ? Does it give you the message of universal equality, fraternity and love ? Does it exhort you to help and serve the poor and the suffering ? Does it prompt you to quench the fire of hatred and animosity ? If you know of any such religion, enshrine it in the temple of your heart Adore it, worship it day and night Such a universal religion alone can do some good to the world If you have to lay down even your life for the preservation and propagation of such a religion, lay it down willingly and cheerfully

Inner Awakening

The sweetness of sugar is within it , it does not come from outside In the same way, the final truth is within you , it does not come from outside Therefore the seeds of good conduct and right living should sprout from within they cannot be imported from outside

Inner Religion

So long as religion remains a matter of inner consciousness and awakening, it remains immortal, all-embracing and living But as soon as it comes out to depend upon outer paraphernalia such as sandal marks on the forehead, the holy thread, the beard or the lock, the rosary or the monasteries, temples and mosques, it begins to disintegrate and comes to die in course of time If you want to preserve and keep alive any religion, let it remain an attribute of inner awakening , let it not depend upon external rituals

The Roots of Religion

You may be forgiven for any change in your conduct or way of living according to the conditions of time, place and society But the basic roots of religion can never change. They comprise the conquest of the Self and destruction of evil passions The non-observance of these basic principles of true religion can never be forgiven

Test of Religion

Does your religion allow you liberty for free thinking and meditation beyond and above the narrow considerations of the individual or sect or caste ? If so, your religion is a great religion, a noble religion Hold on with it , do not let it go from you

Good and Bad

There is a simple method to know which action of yours is good or bad You have to weigh the element of self-interest against the urge for public good behind every action If you find that the element of self-interest is heavier than the urge for public good, then your action is bad The earlier it is given up, the better it is for all

The Aim of Religion

The aim of religion is to make you comprehend the pure and perfect soul within you

Religion and Life

A religion without having a bearing on life is a negation of religion, just as a system of conduct cut off from life is

an evil system of conduct Every single beat of good conduct and true religion should vibrate on the strings of the lyre of life.

Discipline and Direction

Discipline in itself without direction is meaningless. Innumerable philosophers ask you to control your mind and heart I would rather ask you what you would do after you have succeeded in controlling your mind ? If you succeed in controlling your mind, but fail to put it in the right direction, it would be as useless as pulling the reins of a horse and prevent it from going in any direction What is necessary is that you must learn to set your mind in the right direction

Religion Today

Modern man can neither be changed by giving him the temptations of heaven nor by showing him the horrors of hell. The modern man wants to solve the problem of heaven and hell in this very life He needs a line of thought that may prompt him to become an ideal and perfect man in this very life Will any religion or faith respond to this spiritual urge of the modern man ?

Religion and Humanity

The religion which is basically the religion of life is the best religion The religion of life is the religion of Ahimsa, of Truth of Good Conduct, of Equality, of Compassion, of Universal Fraternity and Love A religion will be great and beneficial to mankind in proportion as it emphasizes these values of humanity Right living is the highest religion.

2. Adharma

Is it Religion ?

Man, what does your religion teach you ? Does it teach you to stab and kill little innocent children ? Does it teach you to molest your daughters and sisters ? Does it teach you to strangle others to death ? Does it teach you to set fire to others' houses ? If it is so, kick away such a religion, shatter it into pieces Such a religion has no right to exist even for a moment

Noble and Ignoble Men

He who relieves others of their suffering is a noble man He alone deserves our praise and recognition who is ever prepared to suffer to any extent for the good of others He should be prepared even to lay down his life, if need be The man who does not relieve the sufferings of others, even while he has the power and capacity to do so is an ignoble man, a great sinner

This is also Sin

It is indeed a sin to persecute others, but it is equally a sin to bear persecution tamely and to submit before the persecuter Persecution in every form must be opposed

Not to oppose persecution is to encourage it, and hence it is a sin

Renunciation and Involvement

There has been a conflict between renunciation and involvement since times immemorial Some people lay emphasis on renunciation while others on involvement But I believe that the conflict is not between renunciation and involvement but between the excesses of the two Therefore, so far as possible, an ascetic should avoid both the extremes Whereas excessive renunciation tends to make the ascetic inactive, excessive involvement may land him into the fray of conflicts and struggles of the world Therefore the right course is to find out a middle path between these two extremes, in conformity with the demands of time, place and action

Rama and Ravana

Power in itself is not bad What is needed is that you must be the master of your power, and not its slave Rama was the master of his power, while Ravana was its slave Both of them had powers, yet there was a great difference between the two Power is not bad, what is bad is being a slave to it

The Greatest Sin

A question was once put to an English physician "What is the greatest disease ?" The physician replied, "The greatest disease is to undermine a disease" If you ask me what is the greatest sin, I would say "The greatest sin is not to take sin as sin"

Jealousy

He who is jealous of the wealth and position and luxuries of others is a thief, a plunderer, a decoit, however saintly or austere he may appear from outside

Sin and Virtue

If at the beginning of any action you feel a sense of fear and shame within you, you should believe that the action undertaken by you is against the interest of your soul, and hence it is a sin

Sin seeks to hide itself, it seeks to live in the dark Virtue, on the other hand, seeks to reveal itself, it seeks to live in light

Anything that you want to conceal from others is a sin, and anything that you would like others to know is a virtue

3. Basic Elements of Character Development

Preaching and Practice

I would make one request to all the religious preceptors and preachers of the world that wherever they go for propagating their religion, they should always carry with them the book of their own right conduct along with the heavy volumes of scriptures A right conduct is always more effective than huge volumes of printed books

Be Master, not Slave

Man you are gradually becoming a slave in the hands of your desires Your greatness lies not in being ruled by your desires but in your ruling over them Be the master of your desires, not their slave

Rama and Ravana

What is the difference between Rama and Ravana ? One is the master of his desires, and the other is a slave to them One lives and acts within the prescribed discipline of life, and therefore he is called MARYADA PURUSHOTTAMA The other acts against all limits of discipline, and therefore he is called a monster

Effect of Mind on Body

In order to keep healthy, it is necessay to keep your mind and body pure aud holy both from within and without The purity of the mind is even more necessary and important than the purity of the body The success of life depends upon the purity of mind Every action of the body comes within the effective range of the mind Therefore it is more necessary to keep your mind healthy and holy than keeping your body healthy If your mind is diseased, you will certainly develop some ailment in your body also Mental conflict and distress have their effect upon the health of the body

Control Your Mind

Let your body do any job assigned to it But let your mind concentrate all the time on the soul If your mind does not stray, your body and senses cannot stray from you The kite may fly to any height in the sky but it always remains in the control of the hand that holds the s tring

Four Stages of Anger

The worst stage of anger is the one in which you inflict physical injuries upon others The middle stage of anger is the one in which you express your anger but do not allow it to go any further The next better stage is the one in which you suppress your anger within yourself and do not allow others to know it The still better stage of anger is the one in which you so control your anger that instead of hating or harming your adversary, you only love him But the highest stage of life is that in which there is nothing

but love, and in which the feelings of anger and rancour are not allowed to enter your heart at all

Humility

The more humble you are, the higher you rise and the nobler you become The greatness of man lies not in vanity but in humility, not in insolence but in reconciliation If you want to drink water from a pond, you will have to lower your head to the level of the water You cannot drink water if you keep your head insolently high

Either This or That

You want to enjoy the mundane pleasures of the world on the one hand and to have the bliss of self-realisation on the other Both these things cannot go together God-hood and animalhood cannot be worshipped at the same time One of them will have to be given up And now it depends on you which of the two you decide to give up and which to choose

Look Upwards

Why are you stumbling into the pitfalls of the world ? Do not look downwards, look upwards and attain the peaks Remember, there is evil and fierce struggle below But there is purity and bliss above There you can fully enjoy the pure bliss of life

False Approach

You eat whatever good or bad things come in your way and then you go to the physician for medicine. Is there

any wisdom in it? In the same way, you go on repeating your sins and keep on begging forgiveness of God In this there is no sense of religion or morality at all

Be the same Within and Without

O man, why do you exhibit your false outer self? You show yourself as you really are within Real humanity lies in being without what you are really within If you show yourself to the world exactly as you are within, you will be liberated

Not Words but Conduct

Swami Ram Tirtha Paramhansa once rightly said, "Your actions speak more loudly than your words" Therefore the ascetics should hold their tongue and let their actions speak. The world is eager to learn more from your character and conduct than from your lectures

Continence

Do you keep your wealth in the safe made of gold? The reply to this question will explain the relationship between continence and physical beauty Where there is indisciplined and indecent ornamentation and display of physical beauty to excite your passions, your continence cannot be safe

Continence is the spark of life, the lustre of life Its light and glow are absolutely necessary for life Every kind of health, whether physical or spiritual, corporeal or mental depends upon continence

Continence does not mean merely the preservation of the quintessence of life, the semen, it really means

preserving the purity of your body, your mind, your speech. Continence should be practised by your body, by your actions and by your speech Continence gets defiled by cherishing evil thought within your mind Sometimes lust gets into your mind in spite of all your external austerity Therefore one has to be very cautious lest the desire to enjoy the pleasures of life that you have given up should creep into your mind

Discipline

Like a very strict and careful watchman, keep a very strict watch upon every word, every thought and every action of yours See that you do not stumble into any error Discipline is the essence of life Keep every movement, every action of yours, however small, under strict control Do not lose your hold upon them

Softness and Hardness

If excessive hardness has been forcibly thrust in your heart, there will be no place left for softness even for your ownself This is not desirable Even soft cotton, when pressed too hard, becomes hard like wood Therefore it is not desirable to fill your heart with excessive hardness What is desirable is just to be kind-hearted

The Height of Renunciation

Renunciation is that spiritual height of the soul where the call of the body and the physical senses cannot reach Even the call of the heart is not heard there All other voices get submerged in the solemn music of the soul

Keep off Your Weaknesses

Your fall lies in your weakness, and your rise in your strength The more you are able to keep off your inherent weaknesses, the further you will advance on the path of humanity

Temptations

When the heart of a man is overcast and darkened by the clouds of temptations, he fails to make any distinction between Dharma and Adharma, between good act and bad act If you get thorns on the way of your life, you need not worry, but you should take caution if you find flowers strewn on your way

True Renunciation

The true meaning of renunciation is not merely to give up a thing True renunciation means that you should not only give up a thing but also that you should never again even think of it So long as you do not succeed in winning over your temptations and developing the spirit of detachment, your renunciatian is meaningless Renunciation is not possible without asceticism

Limit Your Desires

Do not allow your desires to grow unchecked, otherwise there will be no end to them There will be no limit Therefore try to curb down and limit your desires Those who cannot limit their desires become Ravana, Duryodhana, Kansa and Kunika But those who are successful in putting a limit to their desires become Mahavira Buddha and Gandhi

Charity

The more you get, the more speedily you should give away in charity This holy principle will enrich everybody from the individual to the society at large It will change darkness into light

In this context a celebrated poet says that when wealth begins to increase in the house or when water begins to seep into the boat, your wisdom lies in draining it out as early as possible Your possessions, like water seeping into the boat, become a dead weight, which may suddenly sink the barque of your life in the ocean of the world

Keep Your Critic by Your Side

If somebody criticises you, let him do so Why do you pay any heed to him ? Why do you feel angry ? Only look into your heart and see if there is really some weakness within you that deserves to be decried If it is there, give it up But if there is none, be happy and fearless and go your way undaunted The opinion of others can do you no harm

Industry

Modern man wants rest He does not want to work The grim spectacle of poverty that you see around you in the society or the country is the result of this desire for rest We talk of increasing our production, but how can production increase while people are dozing in their beds ? Production depends upon the industry of man So long as man lives, he must work hard, and die working. Industry is life, rest death Not a moment of life should be wasted in lethargy

Service

Your heart should be as pure as marble Streams of compassion and service should constantly flow from your heart No joy or bliss is superior to the joy of selfless service

Disease of the Mind

Violence, falsehood, hatred, jealousy, pride, greed, vanity and animosity are the diseases of the mind

The Barque of Life

If you do not close the holes in the barque of your life, it would sink Has anybody ever crossed a river in a barque with holes in it ? Lust, anger, pride and greed make holes in the barque of life Close them down, and you will easily cross over the ocean of the world

Make Yourself Ideal

My dear brothers, if you want your wives to be as ideal as Sita, first make yourselves like Rama Sita can live in the house of Rama, not in the house of Ravana And my dear sisters, if you want your husbands to be as ideal as Rama, first make yourselves like Sita Rama can be the husband of Sita alone, not of any other woman

Foundation Stone

Fear is the greatest weakness of man A fearful man has the heart of a fox, which just lives stealthily for some time and then dies So long as there is fear in the heart of man, he cannot tread on the path of truth He can have no sense of morality or any love for his religion, for his society

or for his country Fearlessness and courage are the foundation stone of the citadel of your character.

Excessive Speech is a Disease

Fever, asthma, consumption and pain are the diseases of the body

The habit of excessive talking, talking irrespective of propriety of time and place, or speaking false, or hard and biting words, is a disease of the mind

Attachment and Animosity go Together

Attachment and animosity are twins Where there is one, the other must also be there If you have attachment with one, you will certainly have animosity with another If you have animosity with one, you will have attachment with another If you desire to be liberated, you must give up both of them

Joy and Sorrow

So long as the waves of joy and sorrow are rising in the ocean of your heart, you remain bound in chains You are far from true asceticism and penance

Vanity

Authority carries a bad companion with it—Vanity This is why as soon as a man gets authority, he begins to think that he is somebody different from the common man He gets intoxicated under the effect of his authority Blessed are those who have authority without its cursed companion, vanity Authority touched with kindness and humility acquires a new lustre and leads to universal good

Be Cautious against Evil

Evil is evil, whether it is small or great It is wrong to say about any evil that it is small, insignificant and therefore negligible Evil always germinates in the tiny seed form, but in course of time it sprouts forth, grows, bears fruits and becomes a tree, and covers everything Then you have to put in hard labour and spend much time in order to root it out Like a parasite creeper it spreads very quickly and saps away all the juice of your spiritual development Evil should never be trusted Always keep yourself scanning See in what way, in what form and when and how an evil crept into you As soon as you discover any evil germinating in your heart, root it out, and swear never to allow any evil to come in contact with you

4. Knowledge and Rituals

The Art of Swimming

Standing on the banks of a river or a tank, if you go on discussing the principles of swimming even for thousands of years, you will not learn the art of swimming In order to learn the art of swimming you will have to jump into the water and make efforts At that time the efforts that you make to prevent yourself from drowning will be the training in the art of swimming

This equally applies to religion also Religion is not merely a subject to be discussed in meetings and seminars Therefore those who, instead of barely discussing the principles and tenets of religion, adopt religion in their life, can easily learn the art of swimming and crossing the ocean of the world

If you keep a crystal of sugar tightly closed in the palm of your hand, you cannot complain that it does not give you its sweetness Of course, if you put the piece in your mouth and chew it, and even then if it does not give its sweetness, then your complaint is genuine But perhaps an occasion for such a complaint will never come That sugar should not be sweet is not possible In the same way, do not keep religion tightly closed within the books Adopt it in your life Then you will see what peace, what bliss it gives you

Knowledge and Rituals

Rituals are a zero placed after a numerical digit in Arithmetic. The zero without the digit has no value Knowledge and rituals also bear the analogy of gold and safe Knowledge is gold , rituals are merely the safe to keep the gold in First you have to acquire the knowledge of Ahimsa and Truth, and then you have to adopt and practise them in your life and conduct The small seed of knowledge becomes a huge tree in the form of rituals. But before you can have the tree, you must have the seed Therefore the fanatic ritualists must very carefully weigh the value of knowledge against the mere observance of rituals

Wisdom and Scriptures

If you close your eyes and put a long-range telescope upon them, what will you see through it ? Certainly, you can see nothing This is exactly what happens in relation to wisdom and scriptures Wisdom is the eye and scriptures are the telescope Without wisdom scriptures are useless

Rituals without Knowledge

Meditation, penance, austerity, Ahimsa are all meaningless rituals without knowledge These rituals without knowledge only weave the chains of *Karmas* around the soul The expectation of attaining liberation and salvation through them is as useless as the hope of plucking a flower from the heavenly garden of Eden

Knowledge without Right Conduct

Knowledge without right conduct is like a moth-eaten wood It is hollow from within External polish can give lustre to wood from outside, but it cannot give strength to it Likewise, knowledge without right conduct is a false show, a vanity

VI

Society and Association

- SOCIETY
  - ASSOCIATION
    - EDUCATION
      - WOMAN

1. Society

The Root Cause of Social Conflict

The root cause of all social problems and conflicts is that man wants to shift his responsibilities to the shoulders of others Transferring one's own responsibility on others, or getting one's own work done by others has become an index of honour and prestige today But this is the worst form of injustice, oppression and exploitation What shame or dishonour is there in doing one's own work ! In fact, getting your work done by others is the privilege of the sick, the lame or the cripple Not doing one's own work, even in a state of good health, is not at all a matter of honour , it is a sin

Individual and Society

Man, do not think that your good and evil deeds are your own concern confined to your ownself No, it is not so Every action of yours has its effect on the world as a whole Is it not a fact that if you throw a pebble in one corner of a pond, the waves will rise and spread over the whole pond ?

Social Good

All human beings are sailing in the same boat The interests of all are the same Either all safely sail across the

ocean, or all drown at once The fate of all is tied in one. It is the concerted efforts of all that can take the barque of humanity safe across the ocean If humanity yields to separate individual interests, the entire race will be ruined Nothing can be gained without rising above the level of individual interests

Universal Humanity

Man, do you hate your fellow-man in the name of caste, creed or nationality ? My dear friend, all these distinctions are false and imaginary Where is the justification for any distinction between man and man ? Why should there be any conflict or hatred ? Pull down all these barriers that divide man from man Go round the world, singing songs of universal humanity The really great man is he who submerges all these apparent distinctions and discovers the fundamental unity behind them

Great Men and Public

All really great men are interested in doing some good to the ignorant public and dispelling their ignorance But unfortunately, the public fails to realise their intentions and oppose them This is why great men have ever received nothing but contempt, condemnation and persecution from the public

We may cite the story of a dog to bring home this point There was a dog He thrust his head into a jar full of sweets In the mean time there was a little noise and the dog tried to run away In this haste the jar was broken and the rim of the jar remained hanging around the neck of the dog Seeing this, a kind-hearted man took pity upon the dog and ran after him with a stick in his hand in order to break

the rim of the jar to set the dog free When the dog saw the man running after him with a stick in his hand, he thought that the man wanted to beat him He failed to understand the real intention of the man running after him. Therefore the dog began to bark at him and started running all the more fast This is the relationship between the great social reformers and the public It is a bitter truth The ignorant public always reacts like the aforesaid dog towards their great benefactors

Religion and Socialism

The really good man is he who performs his duties and obligations towards his family, his neighbours, his society and his country with the utmost honesty and sence of responsibility No living being around you should be neglected in any way and at any time This is the demand of social justice and equity This has always been the tradition of Indian culture In the old Indian terminology it is called religion and in modern terminology it is called socialism

The Basis of Morality

Everybody complains that there is no morality, no honesty and no sincerity in our social dealings today Indeed, how can we have any high sense of morality or honesty when the feeling of sacrifice and service is fast disappearing from our public life ?

The Psychology of the People

Great men speak from the high moral altitudes and the people of the world have their ears turned to the earth Now the problem is how the message of the great men may be made audible to the people

Disparity

Royal banquets are being held on one side and on the other a large section of the poor humanity is not getting even a grain to eat You have, on the one hand, rarest silken garments with gold and silver embroidery on them, and on the other the poor do not have even a strap to wear There are palatial marble buildings on one side and on the other mud hutments without roofs over them It is this disparity which is consuming away the strength and peace, honour and prestige of the country Now money has become the centre of all art, culture and civilization The voice of humanity has been completely stifled All that matters is a pocket tinkling with silver and brass coins The voice of religion and humanity has been drowned in the tinkling sound of gold and silver This state of affairs has to be changed We will have to pull down money from its present sovereign position The present capitalistic system is a huge boa which is swallowing away not only the food and clothes but also the religion and morality of the poor If you want to feed the hungry and give them their due, you will have to pull out the poisonous fangs of this boa of capitalism

The Curse of Acquisition

You see on the one side poor labourers working hard day and night, in heat and cold and yet they do not get even two square meals a day They have to sleep on the hard bare ground under the roof of the sky

On the other side there are capitalists who heartlessly exploit the poor, even suck their blood and live on luxuries, feeding on rarest dishes and sleeping on cushioned beds

This is the curse of the race for acquisition Until we are able to check it, we can never have permanent peace and happiness in the world.

The Majority Opinion

Truth cannot be determined by the majority opinion Do you not know that sometimes even large groups of pilgrims forget their way and stray in the wood ? Therefore, the opinion of the majority is not always correct The large majority of the public is always ignorant It is not essential that the majority must always go to the side of truth In fact, more chances are that it goes to the side of falsehood

Old and New

Are you attached to old things ? If so, put on worn out old clothes and rags, eat stale bread and rotten things and live in old ruins On the contrary, if you are very much attached to the new, eat new unripe mango-buds, sleep under the shade of the newly planted saplings and entrust your shops and offices to the newly born infants No thoughtful man would get himself entangled in the controversy of old and new He will consider only one thing—the utility of a thing according to time, place and situation

Religion does not demand that you should fanatically stick to your old customs and traditions which have lost their utility Religion demands that these obsolete customs and traditions should be replaced by new ones Sometimes it may be desirable to bring down old tottering buildings in the larger interest of the public This equally applies to old worn out customs and traditions also

Spiritual Poverty

No nation ever falls on account of its economic poverty The fall is always on account of spiritual poverty that creeps into it I would, therefore, exhort my fellow Indians not to lose their old spiritual treasures, even if they may have to lose everything else for preserving them

2. Association

Association

A single drop of water falling from the clouds gets dried up on the way or it is swallowed up by the thirsty earth It can neither flow itself nor make others flow along with it. The power to flow and make others flow with it is contained in the river or the stream which is a collection of millions of drops of water Therefore we come to the conclusion that the centre of power and strength is not the individual but the association

Imagine one single tree in a huge desert spread over thousands of miles Further imagine the tree to have one single branch, and the branch one single leaf How will the tree look then ? Really bad indeed Then imagine a huge garden having thousands of trees in it, and every tree blooming and blossoming How will the garden look ? All beautiful indeed From there we conclude that the centre of beauty is not the individual but the group or association

Light Comes from Light

If you want to be enlightened, go to the shelter of him who is himself enlightened and take advantage of his help, guidance and association Think of an earthen lamp It is

full of pure ghee It has the wick also Still it is not giving light It has the power to give light but it does not If you want to light it, bring it in touch with another lighted lamp, and then it will be lighted Similarly, soul has its own power of light But of itself it cannot give out that light In order to kindle this latent spark of light, you have to go to the shelter of an enlightened one As soon as you are initiated by him and you come in contact with his spiritual light, your soul will suddenly be enlightened

Right Association

When a dirty nullah falls into holy Ganga, it becomes Ganga itself Even ordinary trees growing around a sandal tree begin to give out sweet fragrance Iron becomes gold when it is touched with It shows the importance of right association The character of a man is determined by the company he keeps Right association can change a man Man should learn this lesson from these natural phenomena

To the Jewellers

O you great jewellers, you have been long testing precious stones You have already wasted so much of your time, and even gone crazy about them Now just turn to consider the jewels in real living human beings It is to be regretted that while you have been testing stones, you have never cared to test the jewels of mankind You have allowed innumerable precious human jewels to be lost in the dust The rich man is not a rich man but a sinning monster if having the power of wealth, he remains callously indifferent to the needs of the starving masses around him

Be the Maker of Leaders

Man today wants to have his rights, and high position Every one wants to be a ruler Unceasing struggle and conflicts have been going on for this But it is much more important to be the maker of kings than to be a king Can't man get this position of honour ? It is more honourable to be the maker of leaders than be a leader

Conduct is the Greatest Propaganda

Religion is being propagated everywhere today A campaign of propaganda for religion is being carried out everywhere Subscriptions are being raised and gold and silver being given for this purpose But the best way of propagating your religion is to adopt and practise it in your life and conduct Religion should be assimilated in life

Bad Conduct and Association

One foul fish defiles the whole pond In the same way one fallen ascetic defiles and defames the entire creed or sect Therefore the leaders of every sect should guard against such corrupt ascetics

House-holder

The house-holder has a position of great importance in Jain social structure As man, he is the father of all ascetics and as woman, the mother of all ascetics Therefore those who are the parents of the best of ascetics must be exceptionally pure, holy and clean This must be carefully considered by every house-holder

Smile ; Don't Weep

I happened to meet a rich businessman this morning He was weeping on the loss of all his wealth in business May I ask him a few questions ? "Did you ever feed the hungry ? Did you ever give clothes to the naked ? Did you ever wipe out a single tear of a sufferer ? Did you shelter any poor man under the roof of your palatial building ? Did you ever contribute any money to charitable organisations or institutions of the country ? Has your wealth purified and ennobled your this life or the life to come ? If not, why do you weep over the loss of your wealth ? Why are you crying so bitterly ? Your wealth was not wealth it was poison It is good that it has gone Otherwise it would have completely defiled and killed your soul"

Four Kinds of Charity

If you yourself go to the recipient and honourably give charity to him, it is the highest kind of charity

If you call the recipient to your house and give him charity, it is next to the highest

If you give charity on the begging of the recipient, it is bad charity

But if you give charity in expectation of some gain, it is the lowest kind of charity

Quality, not Quantity

Lord Mahavira and his great followers always gave more importance to quality than to quantity One single lion in the forest is more important than thousands of jackals.

3. Education

True Education

True edcation is the light of life There can be no darkness of self-interest around true education The truly educated young man fights not for his own needs but for the needs of the public, not for his own honour and prestige but for the honour and prestige of the whole nation

Importance of High Thoughts

The honour of man lies in carrying the torch-light of high thoughts Nothing great can be achieved only by the power of industry and strength In industry and stength bullocks and asses are certainly stronger than man But do you not know that they have to be yoked and driven to work ? Therefore they are called animals Without the light of high thoughts man will be no better than animal He will have to be driven to his work like asses Such a man has no right to live in human society

Aim of Education

Education does not mean merely reading of difficult and voluminous books, or getting high university degrees Real

education means development of the soul, development of life, development of society and of the whole of humanity

Scholarship

Scholarship does not come by reading voluminous books It comes through the understanding and realisation of life, though it is a rare achievement

Purpose of Education

Manu says that true education should liberate the scholar from mundane passions, superstitions and obsolete traditions and beliefs The true purpose of education is to enable the scholar to think independently for the good of the whole of mankind

True Learning

True learning trains you in the art of deriving real pleasure of life True pleasure of life lies in performing one's duty in the real spirit True pleasure of life means working not as a slave but as a master True education should train you not to escape and run away from the adverse situations of life but to face them and mould them in your favour

Knowledge and Ignorance

Today Man has woven around him, like the silk-worm, a network of ignorance from which he cannot liberate himself

Reward of Science

Mankind today is playing with death It is treading on fire It is applying all its intelligence, all its powers and al l

its talents in destroying itself Man has discovered all the secrets of nature, but what has he gained ? Nothing but poison, nothing but means of death He set out in search of nectar but brought home poison

Test of Education

The test of the educated man is whether he has become man in the real sense Has he risen higher in his moral character and conduct ? Has he been able to change his wrong and insular views ? Has he made social life around him more orderly and disciplined ? Has he acquired courage and confidence enough to stand against evil to the very end ?

Prudent, Fool and the Greatest Fool

What is the difference between the foolish and the prudent ? The prudent would first think and then act But the fool would first act and then think, and finding the results adverse, he would repent And the greatest fool is he who would not think and mend himself even after his failure He is an animal and nothing more

Man and Animal

Thoughtfulness is humanity and thoughtlessness is animal-hood Thought is the only thing that differentiates man from the animal

4. Woman

The Indian Woman

The Indian woman is the living embodiment of peace, service and devotion She holds the torch-light of humanity in this dark world Her heart overflows with love, compassion, forbearance and fortitude She gives nectar in return of poison She scatters flowers in place of thorns She is the Indian woman, the sister of Sita and Draupadi

Who is to Blame ?

Woman is the goddess of knowledge and awakening In the dawn of civilization it was she who first taught us our alphabet and numbers The alphabet and numbers initiated by Lord Rishabh Dev were first learnt by his daughter

Today the woman is superstitious and ignorant Who is to blame for this ? Man did not adequately repay the obligation he owed to woman He kept those very women in ignorance from whom he first received the light of knowledge This he did in his own selfish interest

To Women

Sisters, I would not criticise you for your make-up or cosmetics or for your garments and general bearing No, I

will not Only fools do this, not the thinkers Make yourself as beautiful as you can It is no sin, no crime Beauty is the essence of love But I shall caution you against one thing Don't let your inner spiritual beauty be dimmed in the pursuit of outer beauty You must make yourself beautiful both from within and without Your exterior should indeed be beautiful but even more beautiful should be your interior, your speech But far more beautiful than these should be your mind, your innerself

To the Sisters

Sisters, do you want ornaments ? I would exhort you to wear the ornaments of modesty, good conduct, discipline and duty You will then shine like the flash of lightning You will fill the world with new light These other ornaments and jewellery are useless What light can you gain from them ? The fact is that a flame of light needs no ornamentation It is self-lighted

Man and Woman

O man, what do you think of woman ? Is she a doll or a toy for your pleasures ? Do you want to subdue her by giving her silken garments and gold and silver ornaments ? She is the mistress of the house She needs none of these, she needs love, respect and her rights It is true that sometimes she may demand good garments and beautiful ornaments. She is the devotee of beauty, she loves beauty But if need be, she can easily sacrifice all of them You should not forget that Sita, renouncing all the pleasures of life, followed Rama like his shadow on his exile

VII

Stray Pearls

1. Stray Pearls

East and West

East and West are the two banks of a river The culture of the East is essentially internal and spiritual and that of the West external and materialistic

The culture and philosophy of the East are based on the study and understanding of man's innerself, while Western philosophy and culture are based on the study and understanding of nature The deity of the Eastern culture is infinite consciousness, while that of the West is petty materialism The East holds a jar of cool water to extinguish the fire of material pursuits, while the West carries burning coals to fan it further

Do not see Beauty , see the Merits

It is no use seeing the beauty of a person , see his merits Why do you see the lineage of a person ? See his character and conduct Learning is not so much to be considered as the merits of a person Do not consider the orations of a person, consider his conduct Judge a man not by his penance and austerity but by his power of forgiveness and forbearance Do not see what religion a man follows , see whether there is milk of pity and compassion in his heart

Towards Your Goal

So long as you consider merely the means and ways of attaining your goal, there will be conflict and struggle But as soon as you fix up your gaze at the goal itself, all differences and conflicts are resolved Why are you quarrelling about the ways and by-ways of different sects and creeds ? Go ahead, go steadily towards the lighthouse of eternal Truth

True Diwali

You light candles on the dark night of Diwali and place them on your gates and in the dark corners of the house But what is this Diwali ? There are candle-lights without but all darkness within There should be equal light both within and without

Humanity and Animalhood

The greatness of humanity lies in receiving less and more If not more, we must at least give away half of what we receive God has given us two hands to earn But we should eat with one hand only True humanity requires that you should work with both your hands, but use one hand to eat and the other to give away Those who eat with both their hands belong to animalhood

Leadership

The great social and political leaders of the country have a very heavy responsibility upon them They can bring happiness to the people by themselves living in hardship The lot of the leader is to drink the cup of

poison Those leaders who themselves drink the cup of nectar, give poison to the public And those leaders who drink poison themselves, bring nectar to the public If Lord Shiva had not drunk poison, the gods would not have got nectar to drink

Independence

Independence is a rare and unique thing It keeps you happy even in the state of starvation It stirs every fibre of your heart The bird is safe in its cage It has not to worry about its food Yet it is sad and melancholy becuase it is not independent It wants to fly free in the sky, even at the risk of remaining hungry and thirsty, or being killed at the hands of a hunter. When I see the people of India quarrelling over bread and butter, I feel as if bread and butter is all-important for them, and independence has no value To live in independence, even in conditions of starvation is heroic, while feeding on luxuries in the chains of slavery is cowardly meanness

Great or Good

Which is more important—being great or being good ? Some people say that they are great because they have great wealth But the point to consider is whether your great wealth has made you good also When wealth is used in the service of others, it acquires goodness Some people say that they are great because they are intelligent and learned Again, the point to consider is whether they are good also When man's intelligence and learning are used in the service of humanity, they acquire goodness Goodness is always better and higher than greatness Therefore try

to be good rather than be great In fact, goodness is the soul of greatness

Sin and Sinner

Man, you have every right to hate the sin but you have no right to hate the sinner Sin can never become virtue, but the sinner can, whenever he wills, even this very moment, become a noble and virtuous soul

Speak less, Hear More

Wisdom lies in speaking less and hearing more Man should be quick in understanding, but slow in hearing

Home and Forest

Why are you wandering in the forest ? Can you reform and purify yourself in the forest ? Can you not do so at home ? What you could not be at home, you can never be in the forest

Swan or Crow

The swan eats pearls and the crow eats filth Now you have to decide whether you would like to be a swan or a crow

Message

Do not quarrel about TRUTH , be the defender of Truth.

2. Learn From These Also

The Art of life

Let the clouds of rain thunder and roar as much as they can I love their thunder I am willingly prepared to hear them thunder and roar around me, because, after all, they bring rain Those who do some service have the right to roar or even thunder It is no sin It is within their rights

But why are these other clouds thundering ? Why are they blasting our ears ? You do not rain and yet you unnecessarily thunder You roar, you thunder, but you do no service This is a sin, a crime

And you small patch of clouds, you came quietly and rained here You did not speak a word You did not even inform us of your coming You just came and filled the earth with water You are indeed a blessed patch of clouds, you deserve all praise You have known and mastered the art of life The beauty of life lies in quietly rendering service to humanity Whoever it is that serves humanity in this manner and spirit must be respected and praised Such a man speaks through his actions

And you, another large group of clouds ! You neither thunder nor rain Like half-dead worms you only creep about in the sky and waste yourselves This is no life Nobody knows when you come and when you go The beauty of life is in meaningful and respectable expression of it Obscure life is no life

Four Kinds of Flowers

There are four kinds of flowers The first kind of flower is the flower that has beauty but no fragrance The second flower has fragrance, but no beauty The third flower has neither beauty nor fragrance The fourth flower is beautiful as well as fragrant

Lord Mahavira exhorts man to be a flower of the fourth kind He should be beautiful as well as fragrant He should have the beauty of serenity and sobriety in his bearing, and the fragrance of truth, love and kindness within So long as a man lives, he should scatter his fragrance, and even after his death his fragrance should continue to sweeten the atmosphere of the world This is the speciality of the flower of humanity It may drop and die, but its fragrance lives for ever

From the Mahavira-house

From the Mahavira-house in Delhi I see before me the Gandhi Park A group of children has assembled there around a mango tree A boy picks up a piece of stone and hurls it at the fruits He waits for a while to see whether his stone would bring down a fruit or not If the fruit falls to the ground, he grapples at it and puts it in

his bag But if he misses his aim and fails to bring down a fruit, he makes another attempt and patiently waits for the result The process is repeated again and again Man can learn much from the patience and endurance of these children. Let man mould his life in this pattern. Life is a sport. Throw the stake and see whether it goes in favour or against you Let man try, let him act and then wait for the result If you succeed, it is all right If you fail try again, act again The duty of man is to try, without always expecting to get the desired result Action is in your hands, and not its result Action is thy duty , reward is not thy concern

Desire of My Heart

My one great desire of life is that I may burn away particle by particle like incence and fill the world with the fragrance of human service

Harmony in Discord

See the dark clouds gathered in the sky Flashes of lightning flit through them It means there is fire in water It is indeed a strange phenomenon of harmony in discord Nature gives this message of harmony between the opposites Blessed are those who can understand and discover this harmony in discord and practise it

Obligation of the Cow

The cow eats straw and gives milk. Man feeds on delicious dishes and gives out nothing but night-soil. The cow also secretes dung, but it is used for cleaning and purifying our courtyards and kitchens. The dried cow-dung

cakes are used for cooking our food When the cow-dung is burnt, its ashes are used for cleaning our utencils But the secretion of man is all filth and nothing else This is the great difference between man and the cow Further, our human mother feeds us on her breast for a few days only, and for this she gets the right of receiving our services for the whole of her life The cow gives us milk throughout our life Then consider how much service the cow is entitled to receive from us. Mankind will have to consider it sooner or later

Learn From These Also

Do you want to learn anything from the peacock ? If you wish, you can learn from it the art and secret of self-introspection and self-evaluation While others see its beauty , it looks at the ugliness of its feet

Learn from These Also

The ants can give you lessons in cooperation and discipline Just see how they go in one single row towards their destination They proceed quietly without making any hue and cry about their goal

Learn From These Also

The stick in your hand has also a message to give you The stick is an inanimate thing, yet it helps you when you are weak and you totter You are a living human being and therefore you can render even better service to the poor and the needy

Learn From These Also

Man should live like a rose His life should be like a blooming rose, and his conduct and character should give out a sweet fragrance that may refresh everybody that comes in contact with him

Learn From These Also

Imagine dark clouds gathering in the sky It starts raining, and cool, soft and fragrant breeze sets in The peacock begins to dance with joy Its happiness is the happiness of all The farmers feel delighted to see the clouds gathering in the sky It is the happiness of these peasants that makes the peacock dance with joy Do you also feel happy and dance with joy in the happiness of others ?

Learn From These Also

When your watch does not give correct time, you get it repaired ? Yes, everybody does so Similarly, if your mind does not work properly, should you not take even more care to set it right than the care that you take of your watch Whether it is your watch or your friend or your own mind going wrong, you must immediately proceed to set it right

End of the Body

What is the elephant doing ? He throws dust upon his head by his trunk What is the meaning of this ? It means only this However you may nourish your body or tend it or decorate it, in the end it has to get mixed into the dust

3. O Man !

From Darkness to Light

O man, there is all darkness around you Men are groping in the dark and striking against each other They are all unknowingly going ahead on the path of destruction Indeed, darkness is so bad Would you not like to come out of this darkness ? If you would, be a burning flame of truth, love and kindness Then your lustre will convert darkness into light Your entire life and the atmosphere around you will be lighted

Just Consider This

Man, as the son of your father, have you done your duties as a son ? Have you received the blessings of your father ? Have you raised the honour and prestige of your father by your good conduct ? Do you utilise your time in the service of others ? Does your father feel happy to see you ? Does he praise you to his friends ? Make sure that your father does not feel hurt at all on account of you

Man, if you are a father, consider whether you have done your duties as a father. Have you given proper

education to your children ? Do you give them the message of humanity ? How far have you raised the character and conduct of your children ? How far have you inspired them to be good citizens of the country ?

Man, if you are a brother to somebody, just consider whether you have done the duties of a brother The test of your being a good brother is whether you feel happy or unhappy in the happiness or sorrow of your brother How far have you tested yourself on this touchstone ? What sacrifice of your own interests have you made for the good of your brother ? How far have you made him share your own glory and honour ? If you are an elder brother, have you acted like Rama ? And if you are a younger brother, have you performed your duties like Laxamana ?

Man, if you are a neighbour to somebody, just consider whether you have performed the duties of a neighbour Does your neighbour remember you for your good behaviour ? Does he preserve the treasure of your love in the locker of his heart ? Do you consider his son and daughter as your own son and daughter ? Do you treat his wife as your sister ? Have you wept with him in his sorrow and laughed with him in his joy ? It is the duty of a good neighbour to consider the honour and dishonour or gain or loss of your neighbour as your own honour and dishonour or gain or loss. You must test yourself on this touchstone

Sister, if you are a mother, just consider whether you have faithfully performed the duties of a mother Just consider how much you have loved your sons and daughters.

Have you given them training in religion and good conduct? Have you ever adopted wrong means to provide them with food, clothes and shelter? Have you ever cherished the feelings of jealousy and enmity against the children of others? How far have you promoted love and goodwill among your own children, or the members of your family or the children in your neighbourhood? Take care that you do not sow the poisonous seeds of casteism, individualism or class distinction in the tender hearts and soft feelings of your children?

Sister, if you are a wife, just consider whether you have faithfully performed the duties of a wife Have you poisoned the mind of your husband against other members of your family? Have you not loved, respected and served your father-in-law and mother-in-law as your own father and mother? Have you wasted much of your time in indulgence and pleasures of life and neglected the great necessity of cleanliness? Have you vexed your husband for good clothes and ornaments even when you know that the financial position of your husband does not permit this? Have you not promoted mutual love and goodwill between yourself and your sisters-in-law and neighbours? Have you ever judged yourself by the standards of Sita and Draupadi? Do you grumble, complain or make faces towards others? What is expected of you is that you should bloom like a rose and scatter fragrance of good conduct and cheerful temper all around you You should scatter the fragrance of your soul in the entire atmosphere.

Man, if you are a husband, just consider whether you have faithfully performed the duties of a husband? Have you considered your wife as a partner in every walk

of life ? Have you treated her as your equal partner and friend ? Have you ever hurt her tender feelings on account of your pride or on being misguided by others ? Do you remain faithfully attached to her ? Do you take your wife merely as a means of your pleasure and indulgence ? Do you consider the joy and sorrow of your wife as your own joy and sorrow ? Have you served her faithfully day and night in her ailment ? Do you have the indomitable courage to protect and preserve the honour of your wife even by risking your life in a situation of crisis ?

Man, if you are a businessman, just consider whether you have been just and fair to your customers Take care that you do not make money through black marketeering Never deceive your customer Do not keep your eye fixed upon your own profit , give due attention to the convenience and satisfaction of your customer also Show what you profess, and give what you show Take care that you do not bring any blot to the honour and honesty of your country by your unfair business dealings

Man, if you are a teacher, just consider whether you have faithfully performed your duties towards your pupils Take care to give them good training along with good education Do not poison the minds of your pupils by your own narrow ideas and thoughts You have to raise the morals of your students by your own good conduct and character You have been entrusted with the heavy responsibility of preserving and promoting the conduct and character of the coming generations Children at the early stage are merely clay moulds You can shape them, if you like, after Rama, Krishna, Mahàvira, Buddha, Gandhi or Nehru You have to make them good citizens It is your responsi-

bility to give good citizens to the country See that you make no mistakes in your mission

Man, if you hold a position of authority in the administration of your country, just consider whether you are faithfully performing your duties Do you consider yourself only as a humble servant of the society ? Your function is not to rule but to serve The public pays for the maintenance of your family, and therefore the public rightfully expects good service from you See that you do not accept any illegal gratification Further see that you do not coerce or persecute anybody by the power of your authority See that you don't consider your duty as a useless burden upon you Show no undue favouritism to any particular individual, family, caste or religion

Man, if you are really a man, work hard to make your living Honesty and generosity are the highest qualities of man Do not snatch away from others like animals and monsters

Man should not be the tiny flame of the candle that goes out at the slightest blow of breath And as soon as the candle goes out, there is nothing left but all darkness around you Not even a spark of light is left This is not proper This is unbecoming the dignity of man Man should be a flaming fire that should not go out even when tempests of misfortune blow against it They should rather inflame the fire in him all the more until he should become a conflagration

Soar High

Know that there is infinite knowledge, infinite consciousness and infinite power within you You are not meant to

live like worms You are *Garuda*, the mighty eagle Therefore soar high to the infinite heights of infinite merits

A God with Two Hands

Man, your God is neither in stone nor in wood, neither in fire nor in water, neither in the sky nor in the clay statues Your God is within you, in every fibre of your body You are your own God There is no other God outside you Some scholars call you "God with two hands" Yes, you are a god with two hands Take care and see that by mistake you do not waste away your godhood

Keep up Your Fire

Just consider whether you have any strength or fire within you If you have any fire within you, make it the ocean-fire that keeps alive even in the depth of huge mass of water. Don't let your fire be extinguished Your fire, your zest should be permanent Don't boil up like milk that can be cooled down by a little spray of water You must retain your fire, your strength, your zest in all situations

O Man !

O man, why are you mad after the world ? Why are you so restless ? You have just to take a counted number of breaths in this world Why should you then have so much of love, so much of attachment with this ephemeral life in this transient world ? Why should you have attachment or animosity with anybody in the world ?

Whither to See

If you want to increase and preserve your demerits within your heart, keep your eye on your merits But if

you want to promote and preserve your merits, then keep your eye on your demerits Know and scan your demerits if you want to increase and strengthen your merits Now choose between the two courses

Treat Your Guest as Your God

O man, if ever a needy person knocks at your door, welcome him heartily According to Indian culture and philosophy, the guest is not merely a guest, he is a God Serve your guest in the same spirit in which you serve your God

Desire

O man, can ever your desires be satisfied ? There is a limit to one's power of acquisition The means and sources of wealth, property, pleasures and luxuries of life are limited But the desires of your heart are unlimited and infinite Can the infinite be ever filled by the finite ? Can a lump of clay ever fill the whole sky ? Can fire be extinguished by adding fuel to it ? No, it is never possible You have to control and curb your desires The feeling of greed can never be satisfied with acquisition It can be satisfied only by contentment and renunciation If you want to extinguish fire, you need water, not fuel

4. Saint

The true saint remains cool and contented from the top to the bottom In every impulse of his mind and heart there is the fragrance of Ahimsa, kindness and compassion His consciousness always remains alert like a man awoke from a refreshing sleep

True Ascetic

True ascetic forgives even him who causes injury to him The sandal tree makes fragrant even the axe that cuts it While treading on the path of knowledge and truth, the ascetic considers the whole world as his ownself Therefore even he who causes him injury is considered as a part of himself If your tongue is cut by your teeth, you do not cause injury to your teeth, because you know that there is already pain in your tongue, and so why should you cause pain to your teeth also ?

Blessed are They !

Service is always better than selfishness Blessed are the great men who sacrifice or are prepared to sacrifice their own interests for the good of others.